

January 2006

GLAD TIDINGS

“I will make you fishers of men”

The Faith of Jesus,
The Commandments of God,
And the Patience of the Saints

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EXPRESSIONS



Dear Editor:

I have read the evangelism news in the most recent issue of *Glad Tidings* with great interest. It's wonderful to see how the Lord is raising up more and more people with a burden for evangelistic outreach, and especially those who are already embracing the "Paradigm Shift in Adventist Evangelism," who know and love the third angel's message of righteousness by faith, and have a deep desire to focus on and make known the truth about God's character.

Not that I have a thing to offer in and of myself, for anything good that I have, or am, comes from, and consists of, Jesus Christ; but it would thrill my soul to have the opportunity to join in a future evangelistic effort of *Glad Tidings*.

A. Anderson

In response to Herb Douglass's article *Paradigm Shift in Adventist Evangelism:*

I am mostly writing today to give my heartfelt encouragement to *Glad Tidings'* editorial staff to take the next step. Publish another article and press it forward a little more. Then again, further. Pray that the Lord will rally us to the cause, all over the world. "Terrible as an army with banners!"

I believe that this message is the heart and soul of Righteousness by Faith and is the power behind the Loud Cry message which fills the earth with the glory of God, as it is shining out not only in the words of believers who proclaim it, but in their very own characters, as they have appropriated the faith, love, and magnificence of Jesus unto themselves, day by day and by His grace and through His faith alone. It will be such that Jesus is truly in the world and it will bring the world to crisis. All will know the issues at last and will make their stand, one way or the other. Do we know what this means? Surely, we will do more than mumble the sentiments of "hastening the return of Jesus," and actually take hold of the promises. This planet is dying. Let's go home, already!

From a reader in Canada

Dear Editor:

"The truth that we are to proclaim is that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. This truth is to be developed in the closing scenes of this world's history" (Manuscript 53, 1905).

A heart-felt Amen to Dr. Herbert E. Douglass' article, "Paradigm Shift in Adventist Evangelism." Just before seeing the article, I had received several e-mails, the subject of which was that very thing, that the time has come to declare God's loving character—a component of righteousness by faith—in a larger way, as the center of Adventist evangelism. Out there "in the field" others may have that same heart burden. This approach offers unprecedented power to the gospel, because:

- It is absolutely Scriptural without a trace of manipulation. It does not cancel but unfolds from previously known truth.
- It meets society's need for reason in religious thought.
- It answers questions about Christianity that have existed through the ages.
- It lets no one off the hook for harbored sin.

With our infrastructure of experienced television and other evangelistic ministries, gifted musicians, super knowledgeable health professionals, and professionals in other fields surrendered to the Holy Spirit's guidance, should we not now be lifting up Christ before the world as never before through these wonderful new insights? With these resources combined with a deeper knowledge of God, our message has potential to explode the gospel onto the world scene as never before in history.

M. M. Campbell

A Story of God's Pursuing Love

A personal life sketch and testimony

The early years

Iwent to church as a young girl with my great-grandmother until I went into a foster home. By the time I returned home she had died. As a preteen I prayed for justice against those who insulted me and hurt me both emotionally and physically.

Having come from a poor family, I was picked on for my poverty. I did things I am now very ashamed of because I so desperately wanted to be popular.

Though I attended many different churches, I did not understand the Bible and was never taught to read it. Whatever the preacher said I assumed was right. He was the one with the degree and I was only an ignorant, confused child of thirteen.

I enrolled in various Bible study courses by mail and became confused because none of them agreed. I didn't know what to believe. It never crossed my mind that I could study and learn on my own without going to college to be a preacher.

Instead, I forgot about God. Until my brother died.

The quest begins

Some people told me my brother was in heaven. At the same time they said he was resting in the Lord until Christ returns. I did not believe my brother's heart was right with God, and was afraid he might be in hell. I was mixed up.

My quest began. I wanted to know, "Where is my brother?" The more people I asked about the state of the dead, the more confused I became.

I attended every church I could find—from a Greek Orthodox Church to a Jewish Synagogue. I had taken a Bible study course from the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast. I had learned that the seventh day is the Sabbath. This never left my mind even though I

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The purpose of this newsletter is to share the good news of Jesus Christ as the foundation of effective personal and public evangelism to the world, to encourage the use of and share more effective methods and resources.

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Marriage and the Gospel

Radio Ministry Dialogue with the Gospel in Mind

As heard on WEZE AM 590 Family Radio in Boston

Bob: Welcome. Our program today is focused on the wonderful topic of marriage. Bill, why don't you begin by sharing a few insights into this important subject and how it reflects the aspects of God's character.

Bill: Thanks, Bob. Let me begin by sharing with our listeners that after thirty-one years of marriage, I still feel like I'm in kindergarten on this topic. I'm still a neophyte and a learner. How many years have you been married, Bob? Do you feel like I do or are you the expert among us? ...

I think we both would agree that our wives are gifts from the Lord, rich blessings, and that we're not deserving of them!

Marriage is a great gift God has bestowed upon humankind, exceeded only by the gift of His Son Jesus Christ. However, we don't want to suggest that marriage is for everybody. There are some who believe that God has called them to remain single and celibate. In fact, some Christians would argue that one of the spiritual gifts to the New Testament church is the gift of celibacy.

Our objective today is to trace the origins of the institution of marriage and to focus upon its biblical basis as its theme is interwoven throughout the Bible. In fact, in scripture one aspect of God's character is revealed in the theme of Jesus as the bridegroom. We also want to share some thoughts about how a marriage can be improved or even saved from the divorce court

even when it looks like that is about to be the end result.

But there has to be a biblical basis for marriage or the institution has no sacredness to it; and without a basis in scripture there can be no specificity or parameters, and thus anything goes—which seems to be the way we're headed these days!

Bob: Yes, Satan is working to destroy, piece by piece, the beautiful experience and institution of marriage—both in recent court rulings against the ideal for marriage and also in the high divorce rate in the heterosexual community.

This latter problem, even within Christianity with its skyrocketing divorce rate, is responsible, to a large degree, for what we see unfolding in our present culture. In other words, we as Christians need to recognize that we bear a lot of responsibility for the breakdown of the marriage institution. We Christians must accept part of the “blame” or responsibility for the deterioration of this God-given gift.

It's true, as John Donne said, that “no man is an island,” and thus each one of us, whether heterosexual or homosexual or whomever, Christian and non-Christian, bear responsibility for the tarnishing of this beautiful artistic creation of marriage given to us as a gift by God.

I have no doubt the reason this wonderful institution is under attack by Satan at this important time of earth's history is to magnify confusion over the character of God. When He

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Justification by Faith

The Foundation of the American Experiment

The purpose of this article is to discuss the relationship between the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s and the establishment of the Puritans and the Pilgrims in America during the 1620s. Central to the belief system of both Puritans and Pilgrims was the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith. They, along with most of their Protestant forefathers, did not see clearly (if at all) the consequences of justification by faith: especially as it relates to *religious liberty for all people*.

Martin Luther taught that liberty of conscience is the most important part of faith: “Let there be no compulsion. I have been laboring for liberty of conscience. Liberty is the very essence of faith.”¹

The free gift of God in Christ for all men was understood to be received freely, and not under compulsion, because the sacrifice of Christ was made to preserve the freedom of

humanity to choose the right or, necessarily, the wrong. Without the universal application of the grace of God coming as a gift to every unregenerate human being, no human subsequent to Adam would ever have had a choice.

Consequently, the gospel of grace must logically include the freedom of each individual to choose for himself. God’s grace discriminates against no one. It enables every person to think and to choose. Luther began to see the dawning light of this grace, as he applied it to himself and to those who believed as he did. Luther’s understanding of his belief in liberty of conscience was attacked both by secular and religious leaders.

Emperor Charles V commanded Luther to appear before a legislative tribunal conducted at Worms, Germany in 1521. There an Edict was proclaimed against Luther. Fierce denunciations were embodied in the Edict on May 25, 1521. These denunciations declared Luther to be an outlaw. They banned the reading and the possession

of his writings. The Edict permitted anyone to kill Luther without legal consequence.

In 1526 the First Diet (a formal legislative assembly) of Spires, Germany, was called. In this assembly the Edict of Worms against Luther was withdrawn. Each German state was given freedom to choose its own allegiance to either the Lutheran belief or the Catholic belief.

Three years later a second Diet at Spires was called. This denied liberty of conscience and reaffirmed the Edict of Worms against Luther and his teachings. Shortly thereafter, Lutheran princes united and presented a formal protest against those proceedings. It is from this protest that the term “Protestant” originated. *It was a protest against the denial of liberty of conscience*. The protest of the princes was an expression of righteousness by faith. Liberty of conscience is the expression of, and central to, the teaching of justification by faith.

Preceding all this, in 1517 Luther nailed his theological

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Experiment

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theses or declarations against indulgences to the Church door in Wittenberg, Germany. In that same year John Foxe was born in Boston, England. Perhaps more than any other human, he caused the flourishing of Puritanism which had its humble beginnings in 1526.

That year, 1526, the time of the first Diet of Spire when religious liberty was first granted to non-Catholics, regular (and perhaps subversive) theological discussions were being conducted in the White Horse Tavern in Cambridge, England. Participants included such future Protestant leaders as Thomas Bilney, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, and Thomas Cranmer. Every one of the four was later martyred. During their discussion, these men laid the foundation of what later became known as the Puritan Movement.

However, it was not until after the Protestant purges by Mary Tudor, Queen of England (who became known to later generations as “Bloody Mary”), that Puritanism began to gain in popularity in England.

John Foxe lived during the reign of Mary Tudor. Between 1553 and 1558, English Protestants escaped to the European mainland hoping to avoid Mary’s sword. Geneva and Frankfurt were the main Protestant centers at that time. Foxe fled to Frankfurt. While there he developed a vision of what England could become, if God’s Word were followed faithfully and fully.

Mary’s Protestant sister Elizabeth became England’s

queen after Mary’s death in 1558. Elizabeth reversed what Mary had done and English men and women returned home. Motivation from the pen of John Foxe caused Puritanism to grow and flourish. In his monumental work, *The Book of Martyrs* (first published in 1563), Foxe gave an intense account of the pain suffered by the martyrs under Mary Tudor’s persecutions. The book was a clarion call to bring both the nation and the Church of England into full conformity to the Word of God and thus be purified of all non-biblical elements that both institutions might bring honor to God.

Queen Elizabeth viewed this as extremism. Her vision consisted of political stability and order. In her view, religion should be broad and inclusive, and should base its life on tradition and reason as well as on the teachings of Scripture. Consequently, by 1570 two parties developed in England: 1) those who favored a more rationalistic understanding of church and state, and 2) those who continued to insist that further purification of both church and state was required by Scripture. Out of the ensuing controversy between these two parties, the term “puritan” began to be regularly used by the first group as a derisive epithet of attack upon the second group.

(The Puritans were not a fly-by-night group of extremists. They were concerned for education and high academic standards. Almost all Puritans were graduates of Oxford and Cambridge. Sidney Sussex College and Emmanuel College, Cambridge, were famous Puritan institutions of learning.)

By 1581 it was evident that revival within the English church was not going to happen. Thus the “Separatist” Puritan movement formed. This movement later produced such leaders as John Smyth, John Robinson, William Brewster, and William Bradford. The latter three were directly involved in that group of Separatists which in 1608 left England for the Netherlands, and then later decided to emigrate to the New World, landing at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. This group became known as “Pilgrims.”

Other Puritans chose to remain within the Church of England working for reform. It was from this group that a much larger group of emigrants left England for “New England” in the late 1620s, establishing their colony at Massachusetts Bay.

Until the English government combined the Boston and Plymouth colonies in the late 1680s the “Pilgrims” and the “Puritans” were distinct political and religious entities. While relations between them were generally friendly, members of both groups were crystal clear on the differences between them. The main difference was regarding corporate versus individual righteousness. *Corporate righteousness* was desired for both the church and the state, while *personal righteousness* was to be exhibited by the individual.

The “Puritans” wanted to remain as part of the English establishment, working for biblical reform from within. Even as they emigrated to America, they affirmed their “Englishness.” They believed

that the main purpose of their new colony was to be that of a biblical witness, a “city on a hill.” In their thinking, this would set an example of biblical corporate righteousness in church and state for not only Old England, but for the entire world to see. As deeply committed covenant theology believers, they emphasized strongly the corporate righteousness of their entire community before God and man.

On the other hand, the “Pilgrims” wanted immediate reformation, even if this meant separating from their church and their nation. They continued to think of themselves as English, but their emphasis was on their new political identity and spiritual identity. Because of their intense commitment to the necessity of uncompromising and immediate reformation, they strongly emphasized individual righteousness before God and man.

Notwithstanding their differences, what unified Puritans and Pilgrims was their belief that they were all children of the Reformation. Together they believed the foundational truths of the Reformation and its original Reformers: justification by faith and the sole authority of Scripture. Both groups desired to give glory solely to God. In their different ways, they sought to bring every thought and every action—whether religious, political, or social—into captivity to God.

As with the Lutherans and the Calvinists, the Pilgrims and Puritans did not fully understand nor practice the essence of justification by faith which is religious liberty. Only

for themselves did these four groups believe in religious freedom of conscience. They did not see that the necessary consequence of justification by faith was liberty of conscience, because this would have involved the separation of church and state. But because of the corporate righteousness concepts of church and state they inherited from the Calvinistic covenant theology, it was impossible for the Puritans to clearly understand, much less practice, freedom of choice in matters pertaining to the worship of God.

This would be left for Roger Williams to develop, and this only after he suffered intense persecution by the Massachusetts Bay Puritans who continued the European idea of the union of church and state.

Born and raised in England, Williams became a protégé of the English jurist Sir Edward Coke. Educated at Cambridge, he then became a chaplain, and this brought him into contact with politically active Puritans such as Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Hooker. Williams was a Nonconformist Puritan who brought his religious ideals to America when he arrived at Boston in 1631.

Williams refused to associate himself with the Anglican Puritans. In the following year he moved to the separatist Plymouth Colony. In 1633 he was back in Salem after a disagreement with Plymouth leaders because he insisted the king’s patent for obtaining land was invalid and that only a direct purchase from the Indians gave a just title to the land.

Williams was invited by the

church in Salem to become their pastor in 1634. However, in less than two years he was banished from Massachusetts Bay Colony by the civil authorities for his so-called dangerous views.

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Besides his views on land rights, he held that magistrates had no right to interfere in matters of religion. Williams pioneered religious liberty in the American Colonies. This involved separation between civil and religious institutions, which was totally unacceptable in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Believing in the Protestant understanding of justification by faith, Williams saw the necessity of liberty of conscience for everyone, not just believers. He “was the first person in modern Christendom to establish civil government on the doctrine of the liberty of conscience, the equality of opinions before the law.”²

When he established Rhode Island, liberty of conscience became a Protestant pillar of that Colony. A century later

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Effective Personal Evangelism

Experiencing and Sharing The Faith of Jesus and the Commandments of God

In previous issues we have shared the blessings that God poured out at the Armadale campmeeting, when the messages presented were a “manifest demonstration of the Spirit” (Nov. 18, 1895, *Letter 83*, to Edson White). In this issue, we want to explore how we can personally be made effective in evangelism. Again, we can look to this time of the Spirit’s special work to gain insights and motivation for what the Lord would have us do in personal evangelism. True evangelism requires that we be transformed, that we become persuasive conduits of God’s message of truth to all who we meet.

For this experience, we need what God was demonstrating through W. W. Prescott during these 1895 meetings. Ellen White shared that “the words are spoken in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, his face all aglow with the sunshine of heaven” (November 6, 1895, *Manuscript 19*, unreleased). We need the sunshine of heaven

shining from our faces, too, as we share the good news of the gospel. But this only happens when the power revealed in us corresponds to the power in the message.

With this in mind, we can read in a new light Ellen G. White’s description of the Armadale experience:

The interest steadily increased from the beginning of the meeting. The evening discourses, given by Elders Prescott, Corliss, and Daniells, all presented the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Hardly a discourse was given during the whole meeting that could be called a doctrinal sermon. In every sermon Christ was preached, and as the great and mysterious truths regarding his presence and work in the hearts of men were made clear and plain, the truths regarding his second coming, his relation to the Sabbath, his work as Creator, and his relation to man as the source of life, appeared in a glorious and convincing light that sent

conviction to many hearts. With solemnity the people said, “We have listened to truth tonight” (*Review and Herald*, January 7, 1896 par. 5, emphasis supplied).

Not only was Prescott preaching about the presence and work of Christ in the hearts of men, he was *experiencing* it! This experience is what we so desperately need in our work of public and personal evangelism. If we also can preach Christ in every sermon and make clear and plain “*the great and mysterious truths regarding his presence and work in the hearts of men,*” both by precept and demonstration, then the usual “doctrinal sermons” that seem to be such stumbling blocks to our hearers (the Sabbath, Creation, Second Coming, and Sanctification) will come alive with “convincing light.” *For effective evangelism, Christ must be preached in every sermon!*

The objective and subjective truths of the gospel are unified only in Christ

In the October 31, 1895 Armadale talk which Prescott gave (and which we shared in a previous issue), he centered everything on the importance of Christ, the Word made flesh. He clearly showed the representative nature of both Adam and Christ, not only for the race, but for each one of us personally. “Every one of us was represented in Jesus Christ when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. We were all there in Jesus Christ.... He became flesh; He became *we*” (*The Bible Echo*, January 6 & 13, 1896).

Justification

With the anchor of this foundational truth, Prescott could show the proper relationship between *legal, or forensic justification* (the objective truth of the gospel) and *justification by faith* (the subjective, experiential truth of the gospel). “It was not that Jesus Christ came from outside, and simply stepped into our place as an outsider; but by joining Himself to us by birth, all humanity was brought together in the divine head, Jesus Christ. He suffered on the cross. Then it was *the whole family in Jesus Christ that was crucified*. ‘For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead,’ or as the Revised Version says, ‘All died’” (2 Cor. 5:14; *ibid.*, emphasis supplied). This carrying of all humanity to the cross is what produced

the *objective* “justification unto life” of Romans 5:18 for all men. The resurrection of Christ was not simply His resurrection, it was ours, for He “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for (*dia*, through or because of) our justification” (Romans 4:25). That is to say, not only was He bound to all and each of us in death and in resurrection—we were also bound to Him!

Thus, Prescott could draw the inevitable consequence for those who have a heart appreciation for this gift: “What we want in our experience is to enter into the fact that we did die in Him.” This is the *subjective* experience of those who will receive the eternal benefit of the sacrifice, for “no man receives benefit from that except he receives Christ, except that he is born again” (*ibid.*). This is *justification by faith*. Of course, there are practical benefits of the sacrifice for the unbelievers as well—everything good they ever will have in this life, as well as this life itself.

This linkage, this progressive weaving of the objective and subjective themes of the gospel is consistent with how the Apostle John weaves the objective (“came” in John 1:11; “gave” in John 3:16; 1 John 5:11) with the subjective (“receive” in John 1:11, 12; “believe” in John 1:12; 3:16; “have” in John 3:16; 1 John 5:12) in his presentation of Christ our Righteousness. Paul also helps us trace the subjective truths through the powerful objective truths in Ephesians (“have” in 1:7, 11; 2:18; 3:12; “trust, believe, faith” in 1:12, 13, 15; 3:17).

Only as we see these truths and blessings always *in Christ*,

and not simply as benefits *we have and own* after we receive them from Christ, can we appreciate and experience them in their fullness. Christ is our life, and we should continually recognize the Giver in the gift, lest we become confused about our total and complete dependence on Him for all things. *The gospel requires none of self, and all of Christ.*

Sanctification

The implications of the gospel as it is “in Christ” were becoming clear to Prescott. The experience of sanctification was also true only in Christ, and this experience was also based upon what God accomplished for all humanity, for you and me, in Christ.

The *subjective experience* of character perfection was to be entirely by God’s almighty power:

“Let me say that in this idea is bound up the whole question of predestination. There is a predestination; it is a predestination of character. There is an election; it is an election of character. Every one who believes on Jesus Christ is elected, and *all the power of God is behind that election, that he shall bear the image of God*. Bearing that image, he is predestined to all eternity in Christ’s kingdom; but every one who does not bear that image is predestined unto death. It is a predestination of God in Christ Jesus. Christ provides the character, and offers it to any one who will believe in Him” (*ibid.*, emphasis supplied).

What is the *objective truth* in Christ that brings about this *subjective* heart experience?

“Let us enter into the experience that God has given Jesus Christ to us to dwell in our sinful flesh, to work out in our sinful flesh what he worked out when He was here. He came and lived here that we might through Him reflect the image of God. This is the very heart of Christianity....The difficulty with the Christianity of today is that Christ does not dwell in the hearts of those professing His name. He is an outsider, one looked at from afar, as an example. But He is more than an example to us. He made known to us what God’s ideal of humanity is, and then He came and lived it out before us, that we might see what it is to be in the image of God. Then he died, and ascended to His Father, sending forth His Spirit, his own representative, to live in us, that the life which he lived in the flesh we may live over again. *This is Christianity (ibid.).*”

As in justification, “What we want in our experience is to enter into the fact that we did die in Him,” just so in sanctification “Let us enter into the experience that God has given Jesus Christ to us to dwell in our sinful flesh, to work out in our sinful flesh what he worked out when He was here.” But this only happens through His “sending forth His Spirit, his own representative, to live in us,” “for an habitation of

God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22), which is the way in which “Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Eph. 3:17).

That is to say, the only way any of us (or any human being for that matter) can experience any true manifestation of good character, any true righteousness demonstrated, is through the power of God in Christ, manifested through the Holy Spirit’s ministry within us. This is the essential ingredient for effective witness in public and personal evangelism—the good news of what God has already done for all men in Christ, and the ministry of the fruits of that gift to all men through the Holy Spirit. As Christ is uplifted in this light, they will see in Him a glorious revelation that builds upon the work the Spirit has already been doing, largely unrecognized, in their hearts:

“Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and [their] thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another” (Romans 2:15). “The word is nigh thee, [even] in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach” (Romans 10:8). “Have they not heard? Yes indeed: “Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world” (Romans 10:18).

His purpose in doing so is to lead them to give Him permission to fulfill in them the everlasting covenant promise given to all humanity in Christ:

“This [is] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them” (Hebrews 10:16).

“Christ is the ‘Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world’” (John 1:9). As through Christ every human being has life, so also through Him every soul receives some ray of divine light. Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart.... Cooperation with that power is man’s greatest need (*Education*, p. 29).

“The same power that upholds nature, is working also in man....The heart not yet hardened by contact with evil is quick to recognize the Presence that pervades all created things. The ear as yet undulled by the world’s clamor is attentive to the Voice that speaks through nature’s utterances” (*ibid.*, pp. 99,100).

The heathen savage of Romans 2 (the unconverted Gentile) needs a conscious acceptance of and cooperation with the power that has already been revealed to him. The Holy Spirit has been the power keeping alive in his heart this “desire for goodness.” This still small voice of omnipotent power has also been witnessing through the created things of God about him, through the providences of everyday life. As he is introduced in an open and glorious way in Christ

to this power of creation and recreation, he must now by intelligent cooperation with the Lawgiver let the law be written in his mind (Heb. 10:16). Our job as evangelists is to make him explicitly aware of God's purpose for him in the creative power manifested through the gospel of self-renouncing love revealed at the cross, for "only in the light that shines from Calvary can nature's teaching be read aright" (*ibid.*, p. 101). Otherwise, he might remain

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in the darkness of error such as those who believe that this power is already somehow theirs—that they in themselves have but to harness it to reach a divine plane of existence. But God does not dwell within the selfish heart, even though His Spirit may reveal His witnessing and convicting power within it. *The heathen savage is to be led to conversion, to being born again, to the power of Christ revealed in the death of the cross.* To the extent that he has a "soft heart," he cannot help but respond to the power of Christ! We are to preach Christ in every sermon, and in this to unfold "the great and mysterious truths regarding his presence and work in the hearts of men" by making them "clear and plain," just as

Prescott was doing by teaching and demonstration in the Armadale experience.

We cannot effectively share what we do not experience

However, unless we who are sharing the gospel truths are also *experiencing ourselves* what we are sharing, our witness will be clouded. The end time manifestation of the loud cry of the Angel of Revelation 18 requires a *deep personal experience* pervading every proclamation of the message of the three preceding angels of Revelation 14. We must be those who have "his Father's name written in their foreheads" (Rev. 14:1).

In fact, Prescott's next presentation deals with this very issue. Will we "keep" the faith of Jesus that has been given to us? It is only kept by exercise:

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12).

"In our study at this time we will reverse the order, and say, Here are they that keep the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God. Here is the patience of the saints. The first experience necessary in order to keep a thing is to get it. So before we can keep the faith of Jesus we must get it. *Faith is the gift of God, and no one need say that he cannot have it.* 'For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to

think; but to think soberly, according as *God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith'* (Rom. 12:3). *No one need say that he cannot have faith; for God has given it to him.* God gives faith, and our part is to *exercise* that faith, and just as in the physical frame exercise causes growth, so exercising what faith we have will cause it to grow" (November 2, 1895, published in *The Bible Echo*, January 20 & 27, 1896, emphasis supplied).

An even more powerful text affirming the universal nature of the gift of faith is Acts 17:31: "He hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead"—literally, "having given faith to all, having raised Him from the dead." This was spoken to unbelievers on Mar's Hill, in the context of the coming day of judgment by the ordained Man. If we put this text together with Rom. 3:22; 4:25; 5:18; Luke 8:11; Rom. 10:8,17,18, this is what we might hear and preach:

In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus we see expressed a faith on God's part that reveals His heart toward the human race. This Word from the Godhead conveyed His faith and love, the broadcasting of righteousness to the world, mediating all blessings, including the legal right to probationary life. This is the saving faith of Jesus. When an individual hears it at some fundamental level, and begins to respond positively, it is as if the seed the Sower spread everywhere has sprouted in that person.

The objective truth is the faith of Jesus, the faith of God expressed to all, the gift, the Word, the seed. The subjective truth is that which those who choose to do so receive, believe, and exercise—that to which they respond. The faith that God has dealt to every man (understood by Prescott as the faith of Jesus) is not completely effective as subjectively “saving faith” according to His purpose unless it is truly received, that is, unless it is cultivated and exercised willingly and intelligently by the recipient. This requires the presence of the cross—preached, believed, and borne.

Let God’s Word be True

But what is the practical application of this “faith of Jesus?” According to Prescott, it “is that faith which believes that God’s word will do what it says. It simply lets God’s word be true...the faith that believes that God’s word is true, that lets God’s word work in its power in us, and that submits entirely to that working” (*ibid.*).

Our problem, as evangelists, as expositors of the gospel, is somewhat the opposite of the heathen savage. We all too often give merely a *mental assent* to these great gospel truths, but fail to truly exercise the faith of Jesus, with the corresponding *heart experience* that the Lord wants for us. But the everlasting covenant is for us “Israelites,” too:

“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (Heb. 8:10).

The Laodicean’s problem is the same as the Israelite’s problem—a lack of connection of the head to the heart. This is why the Laodicean cannot be effective in true evangelism, for the woe of Matt. 23:15 describes the effectiveness of Laodicean evangelists: “Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” Although the ministry of the Holy Spirit has given us the law in our minds, it is only by (and in and through) Christ that it can be written on our hearts in letters of burning, hot fire. For as Prescott understood, Christ is in the law, and the law in Christ:

“He does not write one portion of His law in our hearts contrary to our consent. *We are to study the law in Jesus Christ, who kept His Father’s commandments, and then we are to submit to it, that the very life that was manifested in Christ shall be manifested in us. It is more a question of our submitting, and letting that life manifest itself, than of our manifesting it*” (*ibid.*, emphasis supplied).

This is similar to the following statement:

“Christ does not bid His followers strive to shine. He says, Let your light shine. If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord’s glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. You cannot help shining within the range

of your influence” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 420).

Notice again the key word “received” which indicates that this is speaking of the subjective experience of grace (which is “the light in you” because it has been received), not merely the universal spreading of grace (which “lightens every man” because He shines everywhere).

We pray for this experience of submitting to the life, to the power of God, as revealed in the experience of Christ, and as already placed by Him in seed form (by virtue of His union with humanity in the incarnation and the atonement) “in every heart,” that power that is working also “in the hearts of men.” This power is the fruit of the gospel. It saves man from instant death. Properly understood, it is the first dimension of the salvation story, the key to effective public and personal evangelism, as we then go out to present the second dimension of salvation:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

To this end, we present in this issue the entire talk of Prescott (*The Faith of Jesus, The Commandments of God, and the Patience of the Saints*, Nov. 2, 1895) as a separate pullout to study and share as you pursue effective evangelism in cooperation with the Great Evangelist. ✻

The Faith of Jesus, The Commandments of God, And the Patience of the Saints

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).

In our study at this time we will reverse the order, and say, Here are they that keep the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God. Here is the patience of the saints. The first experience necessary in order to keep a thing is to get it. So before we can keep the faith of Jesus we must get it. Faith is the gift of God, and no one need say that he cannot have it. “For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Rom. 12:3). No one need say that he cannot have faith; for God has given it to him. God gives faith, and our part is to exercise that faith, and just as in the physical frame exercise causes growth, so exercising what faith we have will cause it to grow.

You will observe that this is a closing message; for the next thing John saw was one “like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.” What is seen just before the Saviour is revealed? Those that keep the commandments of God. The commandments and teaching of men have come in to take the place of the commandments of God; but here is to be a people on the earth just before Christ comes, who will keep the commandments of God, and who will not be carried away by the traditions and teaching of men.

WHAT IS THE FAITH OF JESUS?

These people are also to have the faith of Jesus. In this time there is a great deal said about faith, but the subject is not worn out yet. This is to be the faith of Jesus, in contrast with the faith of the devil. Here are they that keep the commandments of God rather than the commandments of men, and have the faith of Jesus rather than the faith of the devil. What is the devil’s faith? It is spoken of in James 2:19: “Thou believest that

there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.” When Jesus was here in the flesh, the devils said to Him, “I know Thee who Thou art; the Holy One of God.” The devil believes that God exists; he knows it is so, and he trembles at it; but he has not the faith of Jesus. He has the faith that assents to the truth of a certain fact. We may believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God; we may believe that the blood of Jesus Christ is able to cleanse from all sin; we may

believe that every statement made in the Bible is true; and yet not have the faith of Jesus. We may believe in the creed of the church, which says, “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in His only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;” we may confess to all that, and believe it as a fact, and yet not have the faith of Jesus.

What is the faith of Jesus as contrasted with the faith of the devil? Let us find out from the word. When Jesus came to the tomb of Lazarus,

and said to him that was dead, "Lazarus, come forth," He knew that He was speaking the word of God. He was sure of that; for He spoke the words of God continually. "The word which ye hear," He said, "is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me" (John 14:24). He knew that the word of God had power to accomplish that which He had spoken, and that Lazarus would come forth. That is, the faith of Jesus is that faith which believes that God's word will do what it says. It simply lets God's word be true.

But the word of God is true whether we believe it or not. John says, "Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you" (1 John 2:8). The purpose of the word of God is that it shall be true in us. The word was true in Jesus Christ, and He was the true representative of the word. What the word said, *He was*. And if the word of God is true in us, it will make us like Christ. We have faith in the word of God when we believe that it is a living word, and that it has power to transform our characters, and to work in us that of which it speaks.

FAITH IN THE WORD

This is the kind of faith that Jesus commended. We read in Matthew's Gospel that "when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously

tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man *under* [not having] authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matt. 8:5-10). Here is the centurion, a commander of one hundred men in the Roman army. He says to Jesus, Speak the word; that is all you need to do.

We will say that the Roman authority is Caesar, that the centurion's name is Julius, and the soldier's, Alexander. Julius the man says to Alexander the man, "Go;" but Alexander the man says, "What right have you to command me to go? I shall go when I get ready." That is Julius the *man* talking to Alexander the *man* apart from any authority. But Julius the *centurion* says to Alexander the *soldier* "Go," and the soldier goes at once, because Julius is speaking as a representative of Caesar, and really, it is Caesar speaking. You see, then, the difference between the man talking to the man, and the centurion talking to the soldier. The soldier goes, because all the power of the Roman Empire is behind the word spoken by the centurion.

And the centurion said to Christ, I see that you, Jesus of Nazareth, are here, and that you are under authority, representing God. When you speak, it is not Jesus the son of Joseph speaking, but the Son of God; and I know that the word you speak is the word of God, and that it has power in it. This is the kind of faith that Christ commends. The centurion had confidence that Christ was not simply the son of the carpenter, but the Son of the living God, and he believed that the whole authority of God was in the word spoken through Him.

"Faith cometh by hearing," and it is no use for us to talk about faith apart from the word of God. The fact that we desire something with all our heart, is not the least evidence that it will be done. Faith is confidence in God's word, dependence upon God's word, letting God's word be true. Faith is seeing Christ in His word as the power of the living God, and believing with all the heart that He will do what He says. Faith is not sentimentalism, not merely a belief that something is true; it includes submitting and yielding wholly to the word of God. See to it whether you have the faith of Jesus or the faith of the devil. He believes that the Bible is true, and believes it more fully than many who make a high profession! He knows the Bible is wholly true. He knows it is true but he does not allow it to be true in him. He is a lie; his whole life is a lie; he is a falsehood from the first to the

last; and so is everyone whose character is like his, and whose faith goes no further than his. Our very characters are a lie if they are not in harmony with the word of God.

Before a person is converted, he has the choice of saying, "I am true; I am righteous," and thus making God a liar, or of saying, "God only is true," thus making himself a liar. The Scripture says, "Let God be true; but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). Every unconverted person must make his choice between calling God a liar, or admitting that he is one. Sin is being false, and that is what makes the devil wholly false, because he is a sinner from the beginning; he is a liar, and the father of lies. God says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We must let Him be true and say, "I have sinned." But when we come to that experience in that way, there is something more to be said. When Nathan came to David to reprove him for his sin and said to him, "Thou art the man," David answered, "I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (2 Sam. 12:13). Let God's word be true. When the Lord says, "You have sinned and come short of the glory of God," answer, "I have sinned." When we make that confession, He says to us again, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." To this we must say, "It is so, and let

God's word be true in us." And so we will keep saying, "Amen," not in word simply, but in our lives. That is faith, living, divine faith.

FAITH IN THE WORD BRINGS A REFORMATION

This faith brought the reformation of the sixteenth century, and it is the faith that is to work the reformation of the nineteenth century. In Luther's time the church had covered up God's word, and was giving the people its own teaching, just as it is doing to a large extent now. It was Luther's work to bring the word to the people and let them feed upon it. The word of God is seen constantly in Luther's writing. Faith in God's word, that faith that believes God's word regardless of any outward circumstances whatever, brought the Reformation. Our test will come on the same point. The word tells us that miracles will be wrought to sustain falsehood. The people who depend upon outward circumstances for evidence of their acceptance with God, are the very ones who are preparing themselves to be taken captive by the devil at his will. He can bring outward signs. The word says that he will make fire come down from heaven in the sight of men.

When the earth is removed, what shall we stand on? The word of God will be the only sure foundation, but if we do not learn how to stand steadfastly on that word, we will not be prepared to risk

it in that day, and we will be of those that come before the Lord in fear. We need to become accustomed to living in the presence of God, to seeing Him who is invisible, and then, when He becomes visible, it will not frighten us in the least. This is the faith of Jesus—the faith that believes that God's word is true, that lets God's word work in its power in us, and that submits entirely to that working. No man can have faith in Jesus who is not willing to give up all for Him. He gave us everything, and He takes everything.

Making an acrostic of "faith" may help to impress these thoughts on our minds.

F—Forsaking
A—All
I—I
T—Take
H—Him.

The faith of Jesus means, Forsaking all, I take Him, and let Him be true in me. Being a saint is simply being a true man; being a sinner is simply being a liar. Christ is the faithful and true witness; Christ is the true vine; everything about Christ is true. To be like Christ is to be true; to be different from Christ is to be false.

KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS

Now let us turn to the other thought. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God." But it is just as true with the commandments, that we must get them before we

F—*Forsaking*

A—*All*

I—*I*

T—*Take*

H—*Him*



can keep them, as it is with the faith. How do we get the commandments? In the same way that we get the faith. God must give them to us. “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people” (Heb. 8:10). He must give us the commandments before we can keep them, and He must give them to us in His own way, by writing them in our hearts. “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart” (2 Cor. 3:3). The commandments were first written with

the finger of God on the tables of stone, thus foreshadowing the work of writing them on the heart by the Spirit of God. Compare two scriptures: “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.” “But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you” (Matt. 12:28; Luke 11:20). One says the “finger of God,” the other the “Spirit of God.” God wrote with His own finger on the tables of stone, and He says He will write His commandments in our hearts, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. This was foretold when He wrote them on stone. Moreover, as He wrote them on stone, He writes them now—with His Spirit; and His writing in our hearts is to be just as eternal as His writing on stone. He that

doeth the word of God abideth forever. He that keepeth My sayings shall never die.

The word of God is the very life of God, and this word being in our hearts keeps us through eternity. The word of God, written with the Spirit of God on the tables of the heart, will never change. It is His character. But God never puts anything into our hearts, and He never allows the devil to put anything into our hearts to stay there, unless we consent to it. God will never write His law in our hearts unless we consent. We will suppose now that God is going on with His work of writing His law in our hearts, and He writes, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me,” and you say, “I submit to that.” He writes again, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven



above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments;” and you say, “That is all right.” He writes the third commandment, and again you say, “I submit.” Then He begins to write the fourth, but you start and say, “O, no; do not write that; I cannot let that come in.” What happens? He writes no more; and by your refusal to let Him write the fourth commandment, you rub out what He has written, and the law of God goes out of your heart. He does not write one

portion of His law in our hearts contrary to our consent. We are to study the law in Jesus Christ, who kept His Father’s commandments, and then we are to submit to it, that the very life that was manifested in Jesus Christ shall be manifested in us. It is more a question of our submitting, and letting that life manifest itself, than of our manifesting it.

CHRIST THE LIVING LAW

Writing the law in the heart is simply having Christ dwell in us. Christ was the living law, the law in life. Christ’s Spirit is the Spirit of that divine-human life that lived in obedience to God’s commandments. That is the Spirit He puts upon us, His other self dwelling in us. The law of God is ministered by the Spirit of God. When that comes into the heart, it is Christ

Himself; it is “Christ in you the hope of glory.” And when Christ comes into our hearts, He is the living law, the law of God worked out in character. Christ dwelling in our hearts, means bringing the character of God into our lives. Keeping the commandments of God is manifesting the character of Jesus Christ.

Now a word as to obeying the commandments of God. Keeping the commandments of God is obeying the commandments, but there is an infinite amount of *attempting* to obey the commandments that is not *keeping* them. But righteousness does not come by the law. Some people hang the law upon the wall, read it over, and then try to do what it says. They have a terribly hard time, and then do not do it. Why? Because they put it up there. That is not where God puts it.

He says He will put it in your heart, and you are to keep it there. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." Do you suppose that out of a heart where the law of God is written, can come murders? God has told us what is in the natural heart. He says, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mark 7:21, 22). That is what God sees in the natural heart, but does man see all that? "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Man says, I am no murderer; I am a very moral man. I go to church regularly, nothing of the kind is in my heart. But those very things are there. Unless Christ is there and has cast them out, they have come in and defiled the temple of the soul.

But when Christ, who is the living law comes in, the law is written on the tables of the heart. And when Christ comes in, all the evils of the natural heart are cast out by His holy presence. When we submit to Him, He writes His law in our hearts and lives. Religion cannot be communicated as a theory. Religion is life. When Christ writes His law in our hearts, it is by writing it in our lives, and when this is done, murder and deceit are cast out! That is writing the law in the heart; that is putting the very life of Christ as our life, so that our life manifests His life.

It is a terrible mistake to think that keeping the

commandments of God means to take the law, look at it, and then make up our minds that we will do it. That means only failure and discouragement. It is when we see that Christ is the law of God which we are to receive, and when we receive Him, that the law is written in our hearts, and our lives are brought into harmony with that law. The law of the Lord is holy, just, and good. We cannot make our lives holy, but Christ can do it for us. Oh, that we might see in its true light the privilege of being in harmony with God's law. It is the privilege of being like Christ, the privilege of leading a true life, the privilege of communing with God, who created all things through Jesus Christ. It is the great privilege of humanity to be in harmony with God's law.

OBJECT OF CHRIST'S LIFE ON EARTH

The whole work of Christ was to show the perfection of God's law, and to make it possible for us to be in harmony with it. And when we have Christ's life and teaching to show us what the law of God is, it is perfectly amazing that so many will allow the devil to cheat them out of the privilege of being in harmony with that law. To be like Christ, to be like God, to lead a true life, to be exalted, to be brought into communion with God—this is indeed a privilege. There are those that say, but if I live in harmony with the law of God, I will lose my situation, and what will my family do?

But there is nothing that can happen to those who are in harmony with the law of God, except what God permits. If He takes away one thing, it is to give a better thing in its place. It may not mean more money, but what of that? Does not God care for His own? "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). That is what God says. Let God be true, and every man a liar. Faith makes God's word true, and believes what He says, and sees nothing except the word of God.

GOD CARES FOR THOSE WHO ARE TRUE TO HIM

God is caring for His people in these times. There is abundant proof that those who observe the seventh day, even in these hard times, are better situated financially than the average people. God will care for everyone who is true to Him. He spread a table in the wilderness to show us that, if necessary, He can bring bread from heaven and water from the rock. Trust God to do it. The time is right upon us when we shall need to trust Jesus Christ and His word to keep us in food and clothing, to keep us temporally and spiritually, and those only will be safe who are hidden in Jesus Christ. That is literally coming to pass, and those who do not trust in Jesus Christ will perish. God is warning us, trying to win people away from the destruction that is to come. Submission to Him in all things is our only safety now.

“Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

THE LAW KEPT IN CHRIST

Although we cannot keep the commandments till we get them, that does not mean that the precepts of the law will not be lived out in our lives. That is just what will be done. No man can do it of himself; but we are to *receive* the law of God in Jesus Christ and to *obey* the law of God in Jesus Christ. Then it is that God dwells with us, and the law is written in our hearts.

“Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” It is because they keep the faith of Jesus that they keep the commandments. “Thy word have I hid in mine heart,” said the psalmist, “that I might not sin against Thee.” And “sin is the transgression of the law.” Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the A to Z; and when we hide Him in the heart, we hide the Word of God in the heart; and what we keep as a living law turns about and keeps us.

“Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” We are living just before the second coming of Christ. Through the faith of Jesus Christ, let God’s word be true in our character. God wants us to keep His commandments because they are what will keep us. Christ said, “I know that His commandment is life everlasting,” and that is why He could say, “If a man keep

My saying, He shall never see death” (John 12:50; 8:51). The work of Christ has changed into a sleep the death that came as the result of Adam’s transgression. “If a man keep My saying he shall never see death;” for he has within him the living Word. “He that doeth the word of God abideth forever.” He may fall asleep, but he will never see death. But those who do not keep God’s commandments will see death from which there is no wakening.

THE PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS

“Here is the patience of the saints.” “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise” (Heb. 10:36). We have need of patience. “For yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.” Those that have been keeping His commandments and waiting for Him, have need of endurance, for there is yet a little while.

“The just shall live by faith.” There are three places in the New Testament where this scripture is used, and the emphasis used in each case is different. “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the *just* shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17). There the emphasis is placed on being righteous.

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident; for, the just shall live by *faith*” (Gal. 3:11).

There faith is emphasised.

“Now the just shall *live* by faith; but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Heb. 10:38). Here *living* is the leading thought. The keeping of the commandments has been going on, yet here is a time when Christ seems to delay. If we live by faith, we shall live through all the destruction about us. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.” “The just *shall live* by faith.” “Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.” That is the promise of God to us, but He also says, “Ye have need of patience.” “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” Job endured, although he could not see the reason for it. But in that trial of Job God was working out before the universe the fact that His love can keep a man when all temporal blessings are taken away.

In the 18th chapter of Luke we have the case of the widow and the unjust judge recorded as instruction for us, with reference to the delay of the coming of the Lord. This is the time above all others, just before the coming of the Lord, when we are not to faint. “And he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man. And there was a widow in that city;

and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary [or opponent]. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." To get rid of her he would vindicate her of her opponent at law. "And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."

DISTRESSING TIMES AHEAD

We are in the time of trouble foretold in God's word. These distressing times we see about us are but the beginning of these things. "This know also, that in the last days perilous [or hard] times shall come" (2 Tim. 3:1). Are we not seeing hard times, hard times financially and spiritually? And these times on which we have entered, though there may be times when they will brighten, will grow worse and worse. The slight revival financially in these colonies is not permanent. God has sent out His message to prepare a people for His coming, to gather out a people who will understand these things. Men's hearts are already failing them for fear; they are saying, What do these things mean? "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." We shall see violence and murder. That is the devil's work. We shall see in this world a situation such

as the human mind has never conceived of; we shall see a situation that will strike terror into every heart that does not know Jesus Christ and the power of His salvation. We can see it coming.

In that day God's people cry unto Him for deliverance; but He seems to put off the day of delivering them, because we shall have come to that time when the deliverance of God's people means the death of their adversaries. The deliverance of God's people from their foes can only be followed by the coming of the Lord Jesus and the destruction of their enemies. God is so slow to pour out His wrath upon those who have rejected Him, that He seems almost to have deserted His people. But God will "avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them."

"But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified; for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said He unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prison, being brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake" (Luke 21: 9-12). Notice what they are brought up for. Because a man is hated,

it does not follow that he is a Christian. He must be hated for "My name's sake." Because the world does not like a man, it does not follow that he is a Christian. It must dislike him for the same reason that it disliked Christ. Those that are Christians will be reviled because they are in harmony with Christ's life and character. "And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it, therefore, in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21: 13-19). In your endurance acquire your lives. We are living just before the coming of the Lord. "For yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." It is in our endurance that we acquire our lives. Before the coming of the Lord, there will be a people who will be fulfilling His will. Our place is to be one of them. Our place is to be one of those of whom the Lord can say, "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." *

Marriage



(continued from page 4)

gave marriage to our first parents, He intended that by living in this special human relationship we would gain insights into what our relationship could be with Him.

Bill: Bob, I like what it says in Genesis 2:18: “And the LORD God said ‘It is not good that man should be alone.’”

As you read through the creation story it can be easily noted that often, at the end of His many creation works God stood back and observed, “It was good . . . It was good.” But here, for the very first time, God utters the words, “It is *not* good”—and what was not good? That man should be alone! Thank goodness is all I can say! After thirty-one years of a very happy and rewarding marriage, I’m thankful that God never intended for us men to be alone!

Scripture then tells us that God caused a great sleep to come upon Adam and then from His rib or side He formed a woman, whom Adam later named Eve. Significantly, as some would remind us, she was not from his head lest she have the idea that she was superior to him; nor from his foot, lest Adam receive the idea he was superior to her. No, she was from his side—near his heart—signifying equality and intimacy.

I like what someone has written:

“God is love (1 John 4:8) and God is manifested to us in Three Persons.

The perfectly harmonious Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—exemplifies the essence of self-giving love that is manifested in the fellowship of persons in relationship. As creatures made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), the need for harmonious and loving relationships are integral to our very being.”

Then the writer goes on to comment:

“Jesus elevated human relationships by assigning to them a moral significance alongside a relationship with God. ‘You shall love the Lord your God,’ He said, and ‘You shall love your

neighbor as yourself’ (Matt. 22:37-40). *Neighbor* is often taken to mean the individual with the closest street address, but the original word has a more intimate homey sense. Your neighbor is the ‘person next to you.’ ”

Bob: And, of course, that closest neighbor we as married people have would be our spouse.

So as one studies the scriptures they conclude that marriage is a symbol God has chosen to represent His love for His people.

As it mentions in Genesis, all that God created on the sixth day, including marriage, was “very good.” God has not changed His mind about that. Marriage, as God set it up, is the ideal, and is very good indeed.

Another thought to remember is that in the foundational passage on marriage in Genesis 2:23: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,” Adam used what might be called the language of commitment and promise.

It’s more than just a statement that suggests similarity of origin, such as “we have the same roots” but it is a statement/pledge of loyalty—“I will support you in all circumstances.” Taken this latter way it is Adam’s promise, his statement of his commitment to Eve. Circumstances would not alter his commitment and loyalty to her.

This clearly reveals “shades” of the character of God Himself. It reminds us of God’s faithfulness to His bride—to Israel in the Old Testament and to the Christian church in the New Testament. Despite the wanderings of His people, God remained and continues to remain steadfast and faithful to the vow He made to humankind from the “foundation of the world,” that He would never “leave [us] nor forsake [us].”

Yes, God has married Himself to humanity! That is evident in the reality that Christ took upon Himself humanity forever.

Bill: Good thought, Bob. I think many Christians think that Jesus assumes His old form in eternity. But John 3:16 tells us that “God *gave* His only begotten Son;” He didn’t lend Him to us. The Son of God will bear

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Marriage

(Continued from page 21)

a human body, a glorified one, throughout eternity. Such a thought just boggles my mind! But that reveals the humility, the humbleness, of the Godhead to us. And it more deeply reveals the depth of the Father's sacrifice that was given out of love for humankind.

Another thought in that original marriage is the statement in Genesis 2:24 that the man would "forsake his mother and father and cling unto his wife." Again, those words "forsake" and "cling" have covenantal tones or implications of loyalty and commitment.

I find it interesting that it is the man who does the forsaking and the clinging—not the woman. We typically think of the wife clinging to the husband, but that's not the gospel implication here. We hear preachers sometimes say "hang on to Jesus and He'll get you through" whatever is challenging you. But in actuality, the gospel tells us that we are to let God hang on to us. Sometimes a person, in a time of difficulty or crisis, attempts to hang on to the Lord and finds that he/she doesn't have enough strength or faith. That's true also in the fight against temptation. The gospel tells us differently—let the Lord hang onto you! He is powerful and can carry you through. That's not only true in a crisis, but it's also true when it comes to our salvation—sometimes we look at ourselves and wonder if we are truly savable or if we will ever make it. But remember, it's God who does the saving—He's committed to that even to the extent of the sacrifice of Calvary and the shedding of His Son's blood.

Bob: It's significant to note that the first miracle that Jesus ever performed was at a wedding feast. That miracle was a blessing to the attendees of that wedding, just as marriage in the Garden of Eden was a blessing given to humankind.

Jesus directs our attention in His first miracle to the institution of marriage. That miracle was, in a sense, Jesus' "seal of approval" on the marriage institution.

But Bill, let's shift gears for our audience, because there may be some listening to us who

do not have marriages which are happy ones.

Perhaps there is someone listening who simply is at their wit's end in their marriage. Maybe they're facing a huge challenge even as we speak. So often people are told, "just hang on and keep praying." After a little while these answers are very hollow and insensitive, even though prayer and persistent patience are important in every marriage. Sometimes those cliché answers feel very insensitive and feel like a mockery of the problems one may be going through.

Bill: I wholeheartedly agree. For anyone listening right now who feel he or she is in a lousy marriage and are wondering if it can ever succeed, let me remind you that in Malachi 2:16 God says "I hate divorce."

Now before someone gets all bent out of shape and even more depressed let me remind you what it doesn't say. It doesn't say "*I hate that divorced person,*" or, "*I will hate you if you divorce.*" No, it says, "I hate divorce," which to me implies that if God hates something, He will do everything in His power to work against it or to thwart it from occurring.

So we can conclude that God is willing to work with us to have our marriages succeed and be happy ones. He's not neutral in this scheme of things. He's on the side of preservation. Know that God wants a marriage to work even more than either of the spouses.

Therefore, if you want to see the marriage succeed, be assured that God does as well. That makes two—you and God—who want the marriage to be repaired; and whenever God is in partnership with an individual, that indeed is a very powerful combination.

Bob: Bill, marital problems are most successfully resolved with positive long-term results when they are resolved in harmony with the fundamental principles of the gospel.

Understanding marital problem resolution in line with these principles is very, very important. Marital difficulties cannot be truly resolved merely through better methods or alternatives.

For example: becoming a better cook; not getting angry when he snores through your

favorite movie; counting to ten when you're tempted to argue; or complimenting her on her culinary skills; bringing home a dozen roses at least once a week; going out to chop wood when you get angry at her.

Those methods or tools may have their place, but they will be effective long-term only when they are built on principles of gospel truth.

All the various methods out there remind me of many marriage books which are written with titles such as: *Ten Steps to a Happy Marriage*; or *Forty-three Ways to Improve Your Marriage*.

Unfortunately, such approaches only deal with the outward, superficial layers of our human characters and relationships. They don't change the human heart and mind where the real root of all marital problems lies.

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? [then] may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer.13:23).

Often we overlook the first principles and solutions that God has outlined in His word. We must first believe that God can solve any problem. Keep in mind that nothing is too hard or difficult for the Lord.

So the first ingredient for the healing for any troubled marriage is to trust or believe. Have confidence that God can give you a healthy, happy marriage, just like He gave people healthy physical bodies when He healed them 2000 years ago.

There are definitely times when marriage counseling is a necessity. God has given us people with wisdom and experience in marriage for our benefit and we can thank Him for them also. It is worth the effort to find Christian counselors who have a high regard for Scripture. So if your marriage is in trouble, there can be real value in seeking out a Christian counseling service.

Bill: Remember the promise that God gave to His people through Ezekiel in 36:11: that "[He] would be better unto [them] than at [their] beginnings." That means even in a marriage which has gone sour, God can make it better than it ever was even when you first got married and lived in bliss.

How can such a thing ever happen? Well, not by your maneuverings, ingenuity or expertise.

Next, there is the principle of *forgiveness*. Let me read a text here: Paul writes in Romans 2:4: "Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads to repentance?"

This important principle is sometimes overlooked in Christianity and in marriages. This principle reveals God's character and the way reconciliation works—God extends mercy and forgiveness even before it is asked for. It is God's goodness that changes hearts. It is not that we seek forgiveness and then mercy is granted to us. Rather it is mercy that is first extended, and *that* mercy, *that* goodness, leads us to seek or ask for forgiveness.

This principle is important in marriages—do we wait for our spouse to apologize or seek forgiveness for some wrong committed before we extend forgiveness? Or do we forgive before it is asked for? It is the manifestation of God's goodness through the offended spouse that can change a person. What is needed in most, if not all, troubled marriages is for hearts to be changed. And only grace through forgiveness can accomplish that goal.

Some spouses need to be reconverted, and that can only happen when "much more abounding grace" is poured out upon them. And just maybe that reconversion needs to begin with you—the one who thinks he or she does not need it! If not a reconversion, perhaps at least a deeper attitude of repentance.

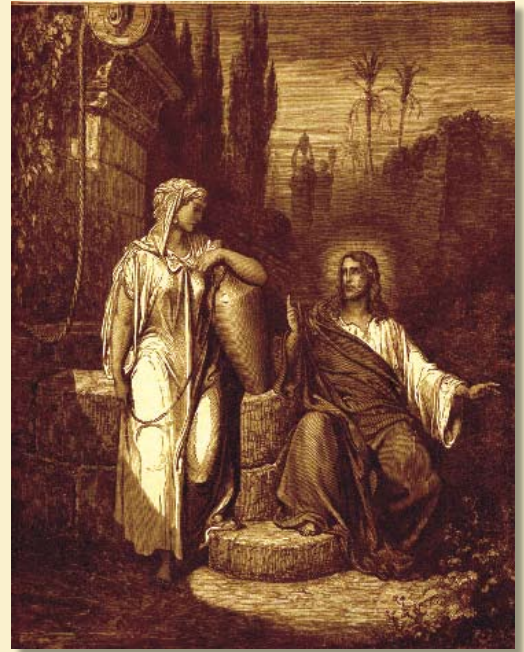
Bob: Bill, I think there is real value in seeing your partner as God sees him/her (and how he sees you as well)—with unconditional love. That is the principle of the original marriage—the covenant principle—love bestowed no matter what.

I want to clarify that that doesn't mean we stay in an abusive home. Loving someone unconditionally doesn't mean allowing that person to take advantage of you or to abuse you.

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The Gospel in Samaria

From *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 103-111



After the death of Stephen there arose against the believers in Jerusalem a persecution so relentless that “they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.” Saul “made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.” Of his zeal in this cruel work he said at a later date: “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. ... 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.” That Stephen was not the only one who suffered death may be seen from Saul’s own words, “And when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.” Acts 26:9-11.

At this time of peril Nicodemus came forward in fearless avowal of his faith in the crucified Saviour. Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin and with others had been stirred by the teaching of Jesus. As he had witnessed Christ’s wonderful works, the conviction had fastened itself upon his mind that this was the Sent of God. Too proud openly to acknowledge himself in sympathy with the Galilean Teacher, he had sought a secret interview. In this interview Jesus had unfolded to him the plan of salvation and His mission to the world, yet still Nicodemus had hesitated. He hid the truth in his heart, and for three years there was little apparent fruit. But while Nicodemus had not publicly acknowledged Christ, he had in the Sanhedrin council repeatedly thwarted the schemes of the priests to destroy Him. When at last Christ had been lifted up on the cross, Nicodemus remembered the words that He had spoken to him in the night interview on the Mount of Olives, “As Moses lifted up the

serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14); and he saw in Jesus the world’s Redeemer.

With Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus had borne the expense of the burial of Jesus. The disciples had been afraid to show themselves openly as Christ’s followers, but Nicodemus and Joseph had come boldly to their aid. The help of these rich and honored men was greatly needed in that hour of darkness. They had been able to do for their dead Master what it would have been impossible for the poor disciples to do; and their wealth and influence had protected them, in a great measure, from the malice of the priests and rulers.

Now, when the Jews were trying to destroy the infant church, Nicodemus came forward in its defense. No longer cautious and questioning, he encouraged the faith of the disciples and used his wealth in helping to sustain the church at Jerusalem and in advancing the work of the gospel. Those who in other days had paid him reverence, now scorned and

persecuted him, and he became poor in this world's goods; yet he faltered not in the defense of his faith.

The persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem resulted in giving a great impetus to the work of the gospel. Success had attended the ministry of the word in that place, and there was danger that the disciples would linger there too long, unmindful of the Saviour's commission to go to all the world. Forgetting that strength to resist evil is best gained by aggressive service, they began to think that they had no work so important as that of shielding the church in Jerusalem from the attacks of the enemy. Instead of educating the new converts to carry the gospel to those who had not heard it, they were in danger of taking a course that would lead all to be satisfied with what had been accomplished. To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them. Driven from Jerusalem, the believers "went everywhere preaching the word."

Among those to whom the Saviour had given the commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19), were many from the humbler walks of life—men and women who had learned to love their Lord and who had determined to follow His example of unselfish service. To these lowly ones, as well as to the disciples who had been with the Saviour during His earthly ministry, had been given a precious trust. They were to carry to the world the glad tidings of salvation through Christ.

When they were scattered by persecution they went forth filled with missionary zeal. They realized the responsibility of their mission. They knew that they held in their hands the bread of life for a famishing world; and they were constrained by the love of Christ to break this bread to all who were in need. The Lord wrought through them. Wherever they went, the sick were healed and the poor had the gospel preached unto them.

Philip, one of the seven deacons, was among those driven from Jerusalem. He "went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits . . . came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city."

Christ's message to the Samaritan woman with whom He had talked at Jacob's well had borne fruit. After listening to His words, the woman had gone to the men of the city, saying, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? They went with her, heard Jesus, and believed on Him. Anxious to hear more, they begged Him to remain. For two days He stayed with them, "and many more believed because of His own word" (John 4:29, 41).

And when His disciples were driven from Jerusalem, some found in Samaria a safe asylum. The Samaritans welcomed these messengers of the gospel, and the Jewish converts gathered

a precious harvest from among those who had once been their bitterest enemies.

Philip's work in Samaria was marked with great success, and, thus encouraged, he sent to Jerusalem for help. The apostles now perceived more fully the meaning of the words of Christ, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

While Philip was still in Samaria, he was directed by a heavenly messenger to "go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza. . . . And he arose and went." He did not question the call, nor did he hesitate to obey; for he had learned the lesson of conformity to God's will.

"And, behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet." This Ethiopian was a man of good standing and of wide influence. God saw that when converted he would give others the light he had received and would exert a strong influence in favor of the gospel. Angels of God were attending this seeker for light, and he was being drawn to the Saviour. By the ministration of the Holy Spirit the Lord brought him into touch with one who could lead him to the light.

Philip was directed to go to the Ethiopian and explain to him the prophecy that he was reading. "Go near," the Spirit said, "and join thyself to

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Samaria

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this chariot.” As Philip drew near, he asked the eunuch, “Understandest thou what thou reatest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.” The scripture that he was reading was the prophecy of Isaiah relating to Christ: “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth: in His humiliation His judgment was taken away: and who shall declare His generation? for His life is taken from the earth.”

“Of whom speaketh the prophet this?” the eunuch asked, “of himself, or of some other man?” Then Philip opened to him the great truth of redemption. Beginning at the same scripture, he “preached unto him Jesus.”

The man’s heart thrilled with interest as the Scriptures were explained to him; and when the disciple had finished, he was ready to accept the light given. He did not make his high worldly position an excuse for refusing the gospel. “As they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot

to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

“And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no

Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men.

more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.”

This Ethiopian represented a large class who need to be taught by such missionaries as Philip—men who will hear the voice of God and go where He sends them. There are many who are reading the Scriptures who cannot understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in.

An angel guided Philip to the one who was seeking for light and who was ready to receive the gospel, and today angels will guide the footsteps of those workers who will allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify their tongues and refine and ennoble their hearts. The angel sent to Philip

could himself have done the work for the Ethiopian, but this is not God’s way of working. It is His plan that men are to work for their fellow men.

In the trust given to the first disciples, believers in every age have shared. Everyone who has received the gospel has been given sacred truth to impart to the world. God’s faithful people have always been aggressive missionaries, consecrating their resources to the honor of His name and wisely using their talents in His service.

The unselfish labor of Christians in the past should be to us an object lesson and an inspiration. The members of God’s church are to be zealous of good works, separating from worldly ambition and walking in the footsteps of Him who went about doing good. With hearts filled with sympathy and compassion, they are to minister to those in need of help, bringing to sinners a knowledge of the Saviour’s love. Such work calls for laborious effort, but it brings a rich reward. Those who engage in it with sincerity of purpose will see souls won to the Saviour, for the influence that attends the practical carrying out of the divine commission is irresistible.

Not upon the ordained minister only rests the responsibility of going forth to fulfill this commission. Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men. “The Spirit and the

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Experiment

(Continued from page 7)

another Protestant pillar—a Federal Republic³—would be established. Underlying these two pillars is the biblical Protestant teaching of justification by faith. Justification by faith, the individual’s exercise of free-will, was the theological foundation for the twin pillars of a great nation that would become the United States of America.

We cannot close this discussion without a reference to religious freedom in the America in which we live today. Today the liberty to worship God according to the dictates of conscience is recognized by only a few as the dearest of human rights. That it should have ever been denied is one of the strongest proofs of human fallibility, and one of the most urgent warnings for the preservation of the Republic against the forces of Dominionism, the modern repetition of the Puritan desire for corporate righteousness accomplished through an increasingly vocal and forceful body politic.

We must remember that little more than two centuries ago, almost all religionists—Catholic, Greek and Protestant—maintained that either the state or the church had the right to regulate worship of God. All persons subject to those religionists’ jurisdiction were bound, under pain of fines, imprisonment, and even death itself in most appalling forms, to comply with the prescribed regulations.

We must not merely claim that we have been the steadfast friends of religious liberty. Because of our belief in justification by faith, this distinctive principle of liberty necessarily compels us to maintain this position. We cannot be consistent in our belief of justification by faith and not be advocates of soul liberty, which is liberty of conscience.

Before any person or institution, religious or secular, can persecute for conscience sake, they must renounce, or at least ignore, the distinctive doctrine of justification by faith. We, as believers and teachers of this doctrine, may not be entirely free from the spirit of bigotry and intolerance; but we need to remember that this spirit is directly antagonistic to the doctrine of justification by faith. This is so because the very essence of liberty of conscience is justification by faith, the freedom to accept or refuse the free gift of grace. This God-given gift of religious freedom comes only through the framework of justification by faith. This precious gift of religious liberty to America comes from justification by faith in Jesus Christ, the one who refused to compel either the angelic hosts or a rebellious humanity to worship Him. He rather submitted to the ultimate in religiopolitical persecution that humanity in His day had to offer—the cross—in order to forever establish the government of God on the foundation of the *liberty* of selfless love, freely given. ✻

¹ Quoted by Merle D’Aubigne, *History of the Reformation*, b. 9, ch. 8.

² George Bancroft, *History of the United States*, vol. I, p. 282.

³ A Federal Republic is a nation in which the powers of the central government are restricted and in which the component parts, such as states, provinces or colonies, retain a degree of self-government. As such, the ultimate sovereign power rests with the voters who choose their governmental representatives. This was in opposition to the established view in Europe of “the divine right of kings.”



“... and where
the spirit of the
Lord is, there
is liberty”
(2 Cor. 3:17).

Life Sketch

(Continued from page 3)

attended a “fire and brimstone” Baptist church. I prayed, “God, please show me the true church.”

Good news in the trash

As my search continued, I found a notebook with a full set of Bible lessons entitled, “Revelation Seminar,” in a trash can. I knew the person who put it there, and when she wasn’t looking I took it out of the trash and ran away with it

church. Finally reaching the “Ws” I called the West Palm Beach Seventh-day Adventist Church. They answered, “Yes, these lessons are from our church.”

I was eager to learn more. I had no car of my own, so the pastor made arrangements for a young couple to transport me to and from church. I heard many strange things I had never heard before. Everyone seemed to understand what the preacher taught. Everyone but me.

He would, for example, tell the story of or refer to Abraham. I did not know whom Abraham

to be cleansed. All confessed sins were washed away forever on that Day. The confessing sinner stood before the Lord spotless.

With amazement I learned about the types and shadows of the plan of salvation. After hearing all that God had done to save me from my sins, my heart was thrilled and I never wanted to sin again.

Confirmation

Recently, I read a book entitled *The Cross and Its Shadow*, by S. N. Haskell. It

After hearing all that God had done to save me from my sins, my heart was thrilled and I never wanted to sin again.

like a homeless child stealing food. In a way it was true—I was starving to death for spiritual food.

I studied with fervor. Because the lessons did not agree with what I believed, I, too, threw them in the trash can.

But miracle of miracles! A few months later those lessons were back on my bookcase. I knew I had thrown them away. This discovery scared me to death! I took them off the shelf and studied them again. This time, with awe, I believed what I read!

Not knowing what church was responsible for publishing these lessons, I pulled out my phone book and looked up churches in the Yellow Pages of the West Palm Beach, Florida, directory. I called church after

was until I read the children’s book, “The Bible Story.”

A turning point

When it was announced that a live Revelation Seminar would be given at church, I became so excited! I felt I would burst. The teacher, Patti Della Buono, used Scripture to prove Ellen White was a true prophet.

She explained the Day of Atonement. I had never heard that phrase before, much less knew what it meant. In the earthly sanctuary, the animals’ shed blood represented Christ’s she blood on the cross which covered our sins. The animals’ blood was placed on the sanctuary’s walls day by day. Every year the blood was

contains much of what I learned in that Revelation Seminar. The story of the sanctuary types and shadows and its fulfillment is what made me fall in love with Jesus.

The Old Testament became precious to me for it contains the Glad Tidings in symbols. Rightly understood, the Old Testament is a storybook that explains the plan of salvation. If you look earnestly for it, the gospel is in every story in the Bible from the story of creation to the cleansing of the earth by fire.

Discovering the 1888 message

Even before I understood what the 1888 message was about, I felt impressed to study it. Through His prophet Ellen White, God has shown

us its importance. The first book I read on the topic was *Manuscripts and Memories of Minneapolis 1888*, containing a selection of non-Ellen White letters, articles, notes, reports, and pamphlets about the Minneapolis General Conference Session. I was especially interested in the article by R.T. Nash on page 353. An account of the Minneapolis meetings is given. Elders Jones and Waggoner read from the scriptures, verse by verse.

Neither man interjected his own opinion. Just verse after verse on righteousness by faith. And this testimony was rejected!

The whole Bible is filled with stories of how much God loves us. So much that He would rather die Himself than wipe this sin-laden planet out of the sky.

Some books that have especially enlightened me and been a blessing to me are *Lessons on Faith* by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner; *Glad Tidings* by E. J. Waggoner; *False Ideas on Justification by Faith, Promises for the Last Days*, and *That I May Know Him* by Ellen White.

Sharing the good news

How do you witness to your own family? These are your relatives, people who know what you were like before you fell in love with the Lord.

It is not practical to walk into the family home, begin making small talk, and overwhelm them with the doctrines you have just learned. But you can share how Jesus has changed your life. Share how He set you free. Tell of His miracles that got you to where you are now.

The Apostle Paul did this. In paraphrasing he said, “I am the worst of sinners. I was going from town to town killing the Christians and the Lord changed me.”

Jesus used this principle, although He was not a sinner. In essence He said, “I came from the Father and this is why. God loves you, and He wants to help you. I also must suffer many things for your sake. Then I will return to my Father.”

A purpose for living

Although my life is dedicated to God’s glory I still make mistakes—plenty of them—but I am now on a mission for the Lord—to reach as many as possible with the gospel. Though I have not seen the conversion of everyone within the range of my influence, they absolutely will be converted if they do not resist the Holy Spirit’s prodding.

The two most important things I can do to help lead my family to Jesus are to live what I believe and to pray for them. There is much life-saving power in prayer.

Our influence can be contagious. While in the eighth grade, I began smoking as a result of peer pressure. A relative introduced me to drinking alcohol. No doubt, you too can think of someone who has influenced you in a negative way. We naturally assimilate what we see and hear. Use this principle to influence people in a positive way. Talk about God’s love and what that means to you in your everyday life. This method is working for me. I plant seeds and trust the Holy Spirit to water the garden!

A ripening harvest

When I first began learning about God I visited my sister. As I shared what I had been through and what I was learning, she began to cry. She began to fall in love with Jesus and now she diligently studies her Bible. The growth will come without me pushing her. God is our Teacher.

My earthly father has changed tremendously! I cannot believe it. He told me, “If I ever decide to go to church it will be the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

My mother admitted to me recently, that “it is true, pork is unclean.” My parents are both changing their diets. My mother is beginning to ask questions, not to argue, but to learn more of God’s truths.

People I don’t know approach me, asking about the Bible. When others see us living within God’s principles, we won’t have to preach a word. Help people where they are. Ask God to help you love others and to see them through His eyes. They will come to you wanting to know more about Jesus.

We are counseled to “be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in” us. I take that very seriously. I have learned to chain reference my Bible. When someone asks me a spiritual question, I can show them from the Old and New Testament what God says. It is a gift from God to be used in His service. ✽

Debra Snipes writes from her home in Burlington, North Carolina, where she volunteers for the Red Cross. Currently, she is writing a book on the promises of God.

Marriage

(Continued from page 23)

But our culture today works against the principle of loving someone “’til death do us part”; today it seems that we love “’til we don’t feel like loving anymore.”

We live in a culture, a time, of very conditional love—“I will love you as long as you ...” whatever.

Loving someone unconditionally is only possible when we see and experience God’s love for us in that same way—unconditionally. If we fail to see that in God’s character, we simply can’t love someone else that same way.

Bill, there is one more thing I think we need to mention. There is an overlooked gift which God has given to make our marriages more successful—and that is the Sabbath.

Someone has written that marriage is the “twin of the Sabbath, but a day older.”

I don’t think it was a coincidence that God gave these two institutions in creation week—marriage on the sixth day and the Sabbath on the seventh. They were to compliment one another.

When a couple marries they have friends and loved ones who give them numerous gifts to make their marriage a good one—to start them off on the right foot, as it were. The gift that God chose for His two children, the newly married couple, was not some cruise or honeymoon to a distant land of beauty. It was not even a new home or something material—it was the best gift He could ever give them and us—and that gift was TIME. Time packaged in the Sabbath day and the Sabbath rest.

Bill: That’s a good point, Bob! I like that thought: “Marriage is a twin of the Sabbath, but a day older.” Really, when you think about it, marriage and the Sabbath were the two great institutions, and the only two I might add, which God bestowed upon humankind right at the beginning in the Garden of Eden.

A marriage which is divorced from the Sabbath has greater difficulty in surviving; not only surviving, but flourishing—and God wants our marriages not to just survive but to flourish—to be a foretaste of heaven.

Every week, for a full twenty-four hours we can bask together as husband and wife in God’s unconditional love, His forgiveness, His faithfulness to us. Failure to take the time to do that begins to cloud our understanding of God, of one another and of our marriages.

I can personally testify to the rich blessing upon my marriage and its connection with the Sabbath. I’m sure you can too, Bob. I hate to think what my marriage would be like if Melanie and I didn’t have the Sabbath. My wish is that all others could discover the greatness of the Sabbath blessing in their personal lives and for their marriages.

And remember, that gift of healing is indeed a gift of God to make our marriages happy. *It’s not something we do.* It is a *gift of mercy* which allows us to know God better and, thus, have a greater marriage.

Bob: I believe there was a famous radio preacher many years ago who later in his life would introduce his wife by saying “I’d like you to meet Mabel, my wife. We’ve been married for fifty years and we’ve just about decided to make it permanent!”

We certainly hope your marriage will be a permanent one and a happy one. ✽

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Samaria

(Continued from page 26)

bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come” (Revelation 22:17). The charge to give this invitation includes the entire church. Everyone who has heard the invitation is to echo the message from hill and valley, saying, “Come.”

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul-saving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble, consecrated believer upon whom the Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities. Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour’s commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands.

Hundreds, yea, thousands, who have heard the message of salvation are still idlers in the market place, when they might be engaged in some line of active service. To these Christ is saying, “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” and He adds, “Go ye also into the vineyard” (Matthew 20:6, 7). Why is it that many more do not respond to the call? Is it because they think themselves excused in that they do not stand in the pulpit? Let them understand that there is a large work to be done outside the pulpit by thousands of consecrated lay members.

Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory. “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). ✽

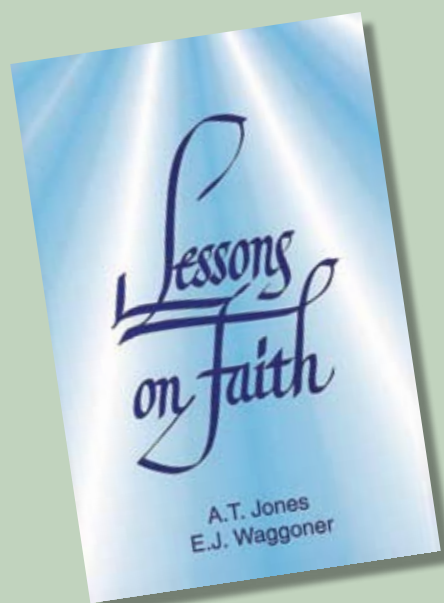
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