



THE GRAND FINALE

A General Conference

Sabbath Morning Sermon

by W. R. Beach

Secretary of the General Conference

TRIOUMPH is the Christian watchword, the *leit-motiv* of Christian teaching. Victory runs like a steel cable through the thought and pattern of the Christian life.

Jesus was the symbol of triumph. He was victory. He had no thought of failure or defeat for His mission or His cause. "For the sake of the joy that lay ahead of Him [He], endured the cross, making light of its disgrace, and has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12:2. (N.E.B.)

The apostle Paul, too, lived and died in a triumphant atmosphere. He understood and proclaimed that a "remnant shall be saved," and that God will "finish the work." Rom. 9:27, 28. He was confident that the last trump of triumph would ring out, that the crowns would be granted.

The apostle John on his lonely Isle of Patmos had visions of victory. "Behold, He cometh" was his Spirit-promoted exultation. The angel of the revelation unveiled prophetic picture after prophetic picture, until the apostle saw, finally, the countless host of the redeemed assembled from "all nations,

and kindreds, and people, and tongues" on the fire-flushed sea of glass. (Rev. 7.)

We, too, look forward to that grand finale, that goal toward which march the pilgrim saints of all ages as they struggle, stumble, and climb upward. The day eternal casts a radiant glow upon our day, giving perspective and meaning to every human situation. Let us ponder, then, on this "great day of the feast," the apostolic lessons of triumph that the church of the remnant should appropriate in view of that grand finale.

Our textbook is the Acts of the Apostles; the scene is Jerusalem. In chapter three we see Peter and John, out of a paucity of things but a wealth of love, heal a lame man and then proclaim the Gospel to the crowd which gathers. In chapter four comes the opposition which never failed to materialize. The apostles were seized and placed in prison. The next day they were brought before the Sanhedrin.

Now, in that day, the Sanhedrin was the embodiment of totalitarian opposition. Theology, ecclesiastical authority, and political acumen were arrayed in the defence of vested interests and against the apostles. A formidable opposition, indeed.

Yet, incredible as it may appear, the Sanhedrin lost the battle. Christ's redemptive community, which brought together the "new born," the "elect," the "saints," in a church "service," carried the day as the Master had promised.

On the very day He first alluded to it as a conquering power that would storm the very gates of

hell Jesus had described His church. (Matt. 16:13-19.) His words were not just theoretical, because the early church revealed precisely this strength. She was imperfect—she was not without fault and weakness—but she was a mighty force for God. In spite of opposition, the church triumphed.

THE CHALLENGE THAT FACES THE CHURCH TODAY

The church of the remnant, likewise, is face to face with a black array of inimical forces. Mankind's woefully misplaced loyalties challenge it as never before. More than half the earth's populations embrace an anti-God philosophy which, despite peaceful co-existence, intends eventually to "bury" the Bible way of life.

On many fronts the church faces a fierce battle with the combined forces of opposition. The frustration and strife and bitterness of the world threaten to infiltrate the church with disunity and dissension. Add to all this an unfinished task. Does this awesome and forbidding future promise good or evil for God's purpose? The answer is simple and clear; the church today can—and will—triumph, by applying the lessons set forth in the conduct of the apostolic church.

A COMPELLING POWER

Let us mention, first, that the apostolic church was gripped by an irresistible compulsion.

One is immediately struck by the tremendous motivation of the apostles. When they were told pointedly "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus," they replied simply, "We cannot but speak." Acts 4:18, 20. Within them was a compulsion that made it impossible for them to act otherwise.

Notice that this compulsion stemmed in the first place from an intense conviction: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Something had completely changed their outlook. There was the first bewilderment when they had stood staring into the empty tomb and realized that Jesus was not there. Suddenly, their doubts were lifted. Jesus Himself stood before them. "Handle Me and see," He said. Jesus triumphant over death! Incredible—but gloriously and wonderfully true. The Master lived!

It was in the setting of this experience that the order came to cease all activity. "You tell us to be quiet! One may as easily command the sun to stop shining or all the waves of all the oceans to be still. These things are part of our lives. We know whereof we speak, and we must speak. We have a message and this message must be proclaimed."

So must we face the world today. Those early Christians knew why they were Christians. They knew what they believed, and they believed it. So must we *believe* our *beliefs*. "Speak for God?" some exclaim; "we cannot speak!" The apostle said, "We cannot *but* speak." This is far more than the difference of a word. It indicates a basic difference in the way of life. It suffices not that we believe and lay hold upon the great truths of God's good news;

these truths must lay hold upon us. Justification, sanctification, and glorification must become compelling realities in Christ. We must speak; we must speak because of the joy of our own salvation; we must speak because this is God's way of revealing salvation to others.

The apostolic compulsion did stem, too, from a divine command. Jesus had said to them, "You shall be My witnesses." Acts 1:8. (R.S.V.)

The very first command Christ gave to the committed group on the mountainside was to share in public witness. Said He: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matt. 5:16. (R.S.V.) Participation actually preceded indoctrination.

The church of the remnant will triumph; but to do so she must be gripped by an irresistible compulsion, so filled with intense conviction that she must speak. And to speak is not the responsibility of a few but of every child of God!

IRREFUTABLE EVIDENCE

The church that triumphs today must present to the world irrefutable evidence. Such is the second apostolic lesson.

Let us return to Peter and John. They had preached God's good news. Jesus had lived, died, and risen from the dead, and would come a second time, "sin done away, to bring salvation [release]." Heb. 9:28. (N.E.B.) But what evidence was there for these supernatural claims? Very simply: a healed man. Who made this man whole? Jesus of Nazareth. "It was by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; it is by His name that this man stands here before you fit and well. . . . And when they saw the man who had been cured standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply." Acts 4:10-14. (N.E.B.) Let the Sadducees deny the supernatural; let them scoff at the idea of miracles—before them stood irrefutable evidence.

The church triumphant will proclaim God's good news in a comprehensive setting. The resources of history, science, and theology will be marshalled to ensure success. However, God's redemptive community being what it is, His message ever must be proclaimed not only by the word spoken but by the life lived. The "healed man" was the apostolic evidence—not a man healed in body alone, but a man made whole in his basic nature, a man whose life had been transformed by the power of God, a man who had become a new creation.

Every Seventh-Day Adventist is to stand before the world as a "healed man"—a living evidence of the power of God. The messenger's life will be a part of his message. Our own lives will be the irrefutable evidence of the truth we proclaim.

Never should we judge the spirituality and effectiveness of our work by the number of activities we sponsor. Activity alone is not a trustworthy indication of spiritual life or true accomplishment. The real question is, What are the results? Are they

aimed at betrothing men for ever with their God and making them whole in Christ? The "healed man" is the essence of God's work—the irrefutable evidence that compels victory.

GOD'S INEXHAUSTIBLE POWER

The third lesson from the apostolic church is that triumph stems from God's inexhaustible power.

Notice, now, the absurdity revealed in the Jerusalem meeting described in Acts three and four. The spectacle is ludicrous to say the least. Here, sitting cross-legged in a great semicircle, are the religious dignitaries, the best minds and names of Judea. In the centre stand the two apostles and the unnamed man who had been healed. The contrast is striking. The three men arraigned before this ecclesiastical court had no wealth, no social prominence, no official support. They were "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13); that is, they had no formal rabbinical training. They were just common people—laymen in contrast to the assembled dignitaries.

Yet the victory belonged to Peter and John and to God's redemptive community, not to the Sanhedrin's elite. How could the apostles stand against such opposition? The answer is that they relied upon an inexhaustible power, the power of a risen Christ—a power that had shattered the tomb and broken the shackles of death. This power took hold of them and actuated them through the indwelling of the Spirit of God. The result was triumph. The power of God rested upon them. "And day by day the Lord added to their number those whom He was saving." Acts 2:47. (N.E.B.)

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Such was the result. Let us trace backward the factors that contributed to this triumph. We notice that this powerful ministry of the Word was wholly the result of the activity of the Holy Spirit. They were all "filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word." Acts 4:31. (N.E.B.) It was God at work, and not men only. Human resources and personal ingenuity had little or no place in the narrative. Through the prophet God had said, "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." Joel 2:28. As a consequence, a church of pros and cons became the church of great acts. Today we are thrilled as we read of the mighty miracles, the unbelievable deeds accomplished by these men once the Holy Spirit entered their hearts.

The same power is promised for our age of sophisticated error. The apostle Peter predicted a last spiritual "refreshing . . . from the presence of the Lord" to take place immediately prior to the "restitution of all things" and the return of Jesus. (Acts 3:19-21.) The Scriptures call this great flash of divine power the "latter rain." (Deut. 11:14; Jer. 5:24; Zech. 10:1.) It will follow the work of the "former rain."

All must know the experience of the former rain so that they can enter into the blessings of the latter rain. We must advance daily in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues (the grace

of the former rain). Otherwise, we shall not even recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. In fact, the last great "spiritual refreshing from the presence of the Lord" may fall on loving hearts all around us though we do not discern or receive it.

Even now He is giving, we believe, the latter-rain experience. According to His promise He is pouring out His Spirit "upon all flesh." Joel 2:28. There can be no mistaking this. We may not discern it or experience it; but thousands do. Thousands are revealing, according to pattern, the intense sacrificial giving and going and living and speaking of Pentecost. Friendliness and kindness flow freely from them. They believe that God will triumph. They can live calmly and serenely amid stress. Rumours do not confound them, nor do threats frighten them. They are fully secure and courageous; they have

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self-control; their lives bespeak such power as to amaze all with whom they come in contact.

PRAYER IS THE KEY

The apostle Paul gives the key that unlocks this power. The key is prayer. For those who understand this, Pentecost does not remain merely a hallowed memory; through daily supplication Pentecost becomes a living, daily experience.

We might say that there are the three great inseparables:

One, the power of God.

Two, the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Three, the exercise of prayer.

The triumphant experience starts with prayer. But do we not pray? Of course we do—in a way. But the apostolic prayer was not just a form, not just words, or an emergency measure. Apostolic prayer was not to bring God to the church, but to lift the church to God. And the prayer that will bring inexhaustible power today will be this apostolic prayer. Such prayer is to identify our lives and our purposes with God's life and God's purposes. The essence of such prayer is to become one with God in Christ and to be used for His glory.

When we pray this prayer, power and unity and devotion will abound. "God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the Day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, page 20.

"Let Christians put away all dissension, and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come."—*Ibid.*, page 21.

The work will be finished. We will yet see greater manifestations of the Spirit as we march across streets and seas in harmony with the apostolic commission. The time is hastening apace when the whole church will go everywhere preaching the Word. Should not this great manifestation fulfil prophecy and usher in that glorious day?

Let us resolve just now to accept God's summons for us personally, and to take this mighty challenge to every land and church. Let us form here an unconquerable fellowship, and accept a new vision of the multitudes of God's children outside our doors, out in the darkness of sin. Let us go to them without delay, these words upon our lips and in our hearts:

*"Lead me to some soul today,
Oh, reach me, Lord, just what to say:
Friends of mine are lost in sin,
And cannot find their way.
Few there are who seem to care,
And few there are who pray;
Note my heart, fill my life,
Give me one soul today."*

So doing, we shall demonstrate to all earth and heaven that we have learned well the apostolic lessons of triumph, and that we are on our way to achieving God's unchanging purpose and the church's glorious destiny.

BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE



Adventist Education and School Grants

It is being constantly impressed on us that education is an expensive item of modern costing. The schools of the nation, from primary to University, are an increasingly heavy burden on the rates and taxes.

What is true of secular education is equally true of our denominational education programme. We must offer an education that *is equal* to that of the state schools, from a scholastic standard; and *is superior* in that God's Word is revered and studied, and the developing minds of our children are protected from the theories of evolution and so called "new morality." That, in brief, is Christian education—free from "science falsely so-called" and fables.

We have been concerned at the heavy expense of sustaining our schools in the British Union, and a study of the situation showed clearly that the main increase in the cost of operating, came from the education grants which we have been giving to Adventist parents.

The Union Committee revised the grants with a view to minimizing the drain on our resources, and notified the parents having children at Stanborough School of the revision. We then had a meeting with the parents resident in the Watford area, and listened to counter proposals submitted by them. As a result of this valuable exchange of views, the grants policy was further revised.

We have received inquiries from the field relative to these revised grants and particularly to that part which assesses the grant in relation to the income of the parent. This article is intended to explain the reason and methods voted.

The idea of assessing grants in relation to the income actually came from the parent group. This is, after all, a biblical principle, as Paul adduced from Israel's experience in the wilderness of sin.

"Provided there is an eager desire to give, God accepts what a man has; He does not ask for what he has not. There is no question of relieving others at the cost of hardship to yourselves; it is a question of equality. At the moment your surplus meets their need, but one day your need may be met from their surplus. The aim is equality; as Scripture has it, "The man who got much had no more than enough, and the man who got little did not go short." 2 Cor. 8:12-15. (N.E.B.)

The principle underlying the grants is that the member in a low income bracket and or with heavy outgoings, with a number of children at our schools is given more help than the member with a larger income and with but one child at school. It is hoped

(Continued on page 5 after "Youth" supplement.)

School Grants

(Continued from page 4 before "YOUTH" supplement.)

that the fortunate member who can afford to pay the full fees will not ask for any grant—thus relieving the Union treasury. It should be borne in mind that, in any case, every child attending our schools—whether at Stanborough, or Leeds, Plymouth, Newbold or Walthamstow—is being subsidized by Union and local Conference funds.

We are not applying a "mean's test" in assessing the grants; each parent is left free to determine the category to which he belongs, and the brethren will accept his personal statement in good faith.

I am confident that every parent desiring to obtain a Christian education for his children will readily accept these revised grant policies. A small committee has been set up to study any special cases of hardship. May I emphasize two important points. One is that we do not wish any faithful member to withhold from his child or children the priceless boon of an Adventist education, for his destiny may well be decided by such a training. The second is that where the parent can adequately carry the expense, he should cheerfully do so, thus releasing much-needed funds for other worth-while projects.

One query that is sometimes raised is that we should use the tithe to build up our school system instead of using it for the support of the ministry or the preaching of the Gospel. The Lord's messenger wrote:

"One reasons that the tithe may be applied to school purposes. Still others reason that canvassers and colporteurs should be supported from the tithe. But a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers. There should be today in the field one hundred well qualified labourers where now there is but one."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, page 248.

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It is further stated that "provision is to be made for these other lines of work (charity, schools, canvassers and colporteurs). They are to be sustained, but not from the tithe. God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry."—*Ibid.*, page 250.

May the Lord help each of us to discharge his stewardship, so that every branch of the work may be strongly supported and the cause of God be developed in symmetrical lines to hasten the finishing of the work and the coming of the Lord Jesus.

J. A. McMILLAN.

SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE



The Royal Cornwall Show

THE Seventh-Day Adventist Church stand at the Royal Cornwall Show was most prominently located this year, being right at the vehicular traffic entrance. The display was built around the theme of "The Church in Action" and showed that in lands near and far, in town and country, the sun never sets on the medical, welfare, educational, and evangelic work of Seventh-Day Adventists.

The thirty-foot-long booth was fronted by a world map, modern in its concept and eye catching in its "day-glow" colouring. The backdrop depicting Piccadilly Circus, and pictures of the New Gallery Centre abuted a beautiful country scene with interior and exterior photographs of the new Bodmin church, which is but seven miles distant from the permanent show ground at Wadebridge. The left flank was illustrated with mission pictures—always a guaranteed interest holder. A missionary film was constantly on show to give the viewers an idea of what the church is doing overseas and more often than not it was a case of "standing room only."

A display of Seventh-Day Adventist publications and masses of free literature completed the exhibition. The display was designed by Pastor K. H. Gammon and the art work executed by Roger Gallaher. Pastor J. W. Ginbey and Don McEune of the Publishing Department were on duty and dealt with the many hundreds who visited the stand.

This is the tenth year that we have exhibited in the Royal Cornwall Show, and the members of the Duchy and Pastor Gammon who saw the start of this endeavour, feel that it has all been very worth while. Each year presents anew the challenge to meet the people of Cornwall with an effective witness of an active church, which is increasingly making its work and presence known in the community.

K. H. GAMMON.

Baptism in Lewisham

ON Sabbath afternoon, June 11th, a large congregation in the Lewisham church witnessed the baptism of five precious souls by Pastor D. C. Uffindell, the fruitage of many weeks of study and preparation. It was a great joy for their father, our head deacon, when his two teenage daughters, Jean and Claudette followed the godly example set by their parents. Of the two brethren baptized, one had accepted the truth since coming to England and the other had found his way back after a few years in the wilderness. The fifth candidate was Mrs. Norma Turner, who became convinced of the truth through studying Voice of Prophecy lessons in her own home. Thus by many and devious ways does the Lord seek for and find His children.

The occasion was enhanced by the lovely music and songs of the London Fellowship group. Pastor Uffindell based his talk on Matthew chapter fifteen, verses twenty-three to twenty-eight, telling the story of the importunate woman of Canaan, bringing home forcibly to his listeners the great truth that we can only have the Lord on His own terms, and that utter and complete trust in Him is our only safeguard.

After Pastor Uffindell and the two elders had extended to the candidates the right hand of fellowship, all joined in singing the lovely hymn, "I will follow Thee, Lord Jesus," to bring to an end a very happy occasion.

MARGARET J. WIBER,
Church Clerk.

NORTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE



Liverpool Baptism

THE birth of a child can be an occasion of great rejoicing and a time of renewal for the whole family as they look forward to the many and varied possibilities and opportunities which confront the young life. The Liverpool church family similarly rejoiced when two new members, Mrs. D. Voce and Mrs. A. Scott, were added to the church family on May 21st. They were baptized by our minister, Pastor L. A. D. Lane, in accordance with the scripture, "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead." Col. 2:12.

Pastor K. A. Elias, president of the North England Conference, extended the hand of church fellowship to these two sisters on behalf of the conference, as also did Pastor Lane and our church elder, Mr. W. Voce, on behalf of the local church. Pastor Elias remarked that it was the first time in his memory that a church elder had welcomed his own wife into the church on the occasion of her baptism, and that it was indeed an occasion for rejoicing.

The Liverpool church family welcomes these two precious souls into their midst, and although they were both already closely tied with us before their baptism, we hope and pray that these ties will be drawn even closer.

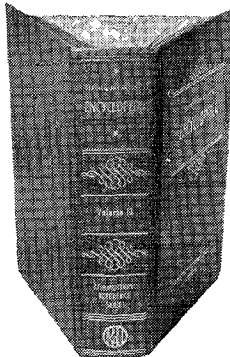
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Thirteenth Sabbath and Baptism in Bradford

ON June 25th, after a week of inclement weather, the sun shone brightly out-of-doors, and indoors the sunshine of God's love was in our hearts. It was the Thirteenth Sabbath and our superintendent had arranged a varied programme for us. Some of the young people were dressed in sarongs of the most beautiful shades and of exquisitely embroidered workmanship, and looked a picture of happiness as they sang, "Be careful, children, what you do."

The mission story touched us all to dig deeper into our pockets, for the offering amounted to over £7. Our assistant superintendent, dressed in

her native costume, along with two friends, sang part of the sixth Psalm in their native tongue, which was intriguing to us. Brother Alan Crowe took the lesson study.

Following Sabbath school, Pastor A. E. Cook took charge of the divine service. The text he chose was Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Pastor Cook has been preparing souls to step out for Christ and His truth, and the story of Paul's life and trials was very fitting. "There can be no impossibilities," he said, "to those who put their trust in Christ. If we give all to Christ, we shall receive all from Him."

It was now time for the lunch break, and as members and friends made their way to the youth hall a wonderful spirit of love and fellowship was manifest.

Our physical hunger being satisfied, we awaited the climax to our Sabbath day, Pastor Cook's second baptism, his first having been in May, when eight dear ones were baptized.

Every seat was occupied and the organ was softly playing. The church was tastefully decorated with flowers to add charm to an inspiring occasion as the candidates were preparing to enter the waters.

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Brother Crowe led the singing, and when all was ready, Pastor Cook prayed for God's Holy Spirit to be in our midst to bless and that what we did on earth might be ratified in heaven. Our hearts were lifted up in praise to God for His Son, who became a Sin-bearer and a Saviour to all who follow Him.

Eight candidates entered the waters of baptism leaving behind the old life of sin and arose to newness of life in Christ Jesus. Two dear ones were accepted by vote. Nine were welcomed into Bradford membership and one into the Halifax church. May God bless each one of them. G. GRANT, *Press Relations Secretary.*

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THE Treasurer of South England Conference acknowledges with thanks the receipt of £45, £20, and £2 tithe from Anonymous.

THE Treasurer of the South England Conference acknowledges with thanks the following gifts: Two gifts of 10/- each from Devon, 30/- from London, N.14, £10 from Cornwall, £10 and £7 "Anonymous."

THE Treasurer of the North England Conference acknowledges with thanks the receipt of the Lord's tithe £9, and a Voice of Prophecy offering of £5; also a Thirteenth Sabbath offering of £5 from M.C.

Church Addresses

KENT

DURING the month of August the usual Sabbath worship services at Margate will be suspended but they will recommence on Sabbath, September 3rd. Times of services: Sabbath school, 10 a.m.; Divine service, 11 a.m. Meeting Place: Committee Room No. 2, 42 Hawley Square, Margate.

Seventh-Day Adventists and friends in the neighbourhood of Margate are reminded that regular services are held at Canterbury and Folkestone. Canterbury: Sabbath school, 2.15 p.m.; Divine service, 3.15 p.m. at Friend's Meeting House, The Friars, Canterbury. Folkestone: Sabbath school, 10 a.m.; Divine service, 11.10 a.m. at S.D.A. church, The Parade, The Bayle, Folkestone.

E. H. FOSTER, *President.*

Important!

KEEP OCTOBER 2nd OPEN! Watch for announcement in next issue. This will never happen again—You Must Be There!

Newbold College Library Needs

THE Librarian is anxious to complete the College holdings of *The Ministry*, *The Review and Herald*, and *The Youth's Instructor*. The following issues are needed:

The Ministry: December, 1961; October, 1965.

The Review and Herald: January 27, 1963.

The Youth's Instructor: May 5, 1964; January 12, 1965; November 23, 1965; December 21, 1965; December 28, 1965; January 18, 1966; February 15, 1966.

The Librarian will be pleased to hear from anyone who can let the College have any or all of the above magazines, and is willing to pay for the issues and postage if necessary. Please address letters or parcels to the Librarian, Newbold College, Bracknell, Berkshire.



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July 29th	8.54	9.07	9.26	9.04 9.31
Aug. 5th	8.42	8.55	9.12	8.52 9.18

BRITISH ADVENT MESSENGER

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