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## Readings for the Week of Prayer

To Be Read in All the Churches, December 7 to 14, 1935

(Reading for Sabbath, December 7)

### "Lovest Thou Me?"

BY C. H. WATSON

"BELOVED, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." 1 John 4:7-13.

As we come to the word of God during this Week of Prayer, it will be good and helpful for us to approach its study by opening our hearts to the truth of this scripture. Indeed, in these words there is an appeal that at once challenges our mode of life, reveals the nature of God, and calls us to the highest earthly relationship and to the deepest knowledge of the divine, that it is possible for us to attain.

Three times within ten verses of this chapter we are told that "God is love." Three times within those same verses we are also told that God loves us. Here, too, we are told that He loved us when we did not love Him. Then in these same verses the amazing truth is set forth that He gave all to win our love—not that He needed our love for Himself, but because the one way to rescue us from eternal death is to bring us to love Him. God's way of saving us is to win our love.

#### *Proof of Our Love of God*

It is therefore as important as eternal life itself that we love God. The proof that we have His love in our hearts is found in our love for one another. "If we love one another, . . . His love is perfected in us." If God's love is perfected in us because we love one another, we are assured also that "God dwelleth in us," and "that we dwell in Him." "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit."

#### *To Love God Is to Know God*

It is of equal importance also to know God, for it is written, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." But the only way to know God is to love Him, for "every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." The best evidence, too, that we know God, is that we love one another.

#### *The Measure of Our Love of God*

Think what we may of ourselves and of our standing in the gospel of our Lord, we are measured inexorably by the quality of our heart's attitude toward our brethren. Not because we feel that we are better than our brethren, or more worthy than they of the love of God, do "we know that we have passed from death unto life," but "because we love the brethren." "He that loveth not his brother" has not yet entered into life, but "abideth in death." 1 John 3:14.

#### *To Love Our Enemies Also*

In the sermon on the mount Christ, who "loved us" and gave "Himself for us," took us a good deal farther in this

matter than has John. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:43-45.

This, too, is an amazing statement. Naturally, we reason that we do well when we love our friends, but this scripture tells us that the children of God love their enemies. We are inclined to applaud ourselves when we do good to those who think well of us, but being children of our Father in heaven, we should do good to them that hate us. In this is the love of God in us perfected. When we love only those who love us, the reaction of such a course upon our own hearts is harmful; but when we do not love even the brethren, the result to ourselves is spiritual disaster.

#### *The Love of God a Constraining Power*

Before we came to God, our attitude toward His claims upon us, and toward the well-being of our fellows, was one of indifference. But with the love of God in our hearts we can be indifferent neither to our brethren in the church of the Lord, nor to our fellow men even in the uttermost parts of the earth. That love in us is a mighty constraining power, urging us, not only to send the gospel to those afar off, but also to forgive and to love the brethren with whom we have fellowship in our own home church.

This love has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It is by the

power of this love, manifested in us, that the world to whom we send the gospel shall know that in it there is indeed help for fallen, helpless, ruined man. The world knows far less of the love of God than it should, because all too little of its power is permitted to witness for Him in the lives of His children. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish;" yet millions of the world will know that great fact only as a beautiful saying, unless they can see that the gospel of Christ has taken hatred and indifference from the hearts of God's children, and that the holiness of His love is in our lives.

#### *Love Shines Out to the World*

There is great need for such a witness to the world at this time. Never before has human thought concerning God been so darkened by unbelief. We have indeed come to the experience, foretold by the prophet, when, religiously, darkness covers "the earth, and gross darkness the people." If ever there has been need for the light and power of the love of God to shine forth from the lives of God's people, that need is much greater now; and to His church the Lord is calling, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Not by a mere intellectual possession of correct formulas of truth has the church been made "the light of the world, a city" "set on a hill [that] cannot be hid," but rather by the love of God possessing the hearts of its members, and shining out in their lives to all men.

#### *Love Embraces All Men*

The love of God embraces the whole human race. "God so loved the world, that He gave." From the beginning to the end of the Bible this truth is impressed upon our hearts. His love includes all men in its purpose to save from death and to give everlasting life. Because He loved all men, He gave His only-begotten Son to die. If, therefore, any man shall now perish, it will not be because he was unloved and uncared for, but notwithstanding the love that gave all and is everlasting.

When the Lord called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, He had the blessing of all men through Abraham in mind. In the New Testament we discover that His purpose through Abraham is fulfilled in Christ. Thus in calling Abraham, God had the giving of His only-begotten Son in mind. His love was seeking a human avenue along which it could pass to all men and effect their rescue from eternal death.

It will be remembered that God gave His only-begotten Son that the believing *should not perish*. When we stop to contemplate that truth, it amazes us. In giving His Son, God gave all. He could give no more. He had no more to give. Why did He do it?—That we should not perish. Then God must surely attach a great deal of importance to our living eternally. Our perishing must be an awful thing to His mind. Can we

wonder that it is written that He has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth"? or that He asks us the question, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? . . . and not that he should return from his ways, and live?"

#### *God's Love Is Individual*

Can we wonder, either, that it is also written, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth"? This personal aspect of the love of God is very pronounced in the Scriptures. He "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This gift is to each because it is to all. His call through that gift is to all because it is to each. "Whosoever," is first personal and individual before it becomes collective. It is for those about to perish that the love of God has yielded up all, and His love rejoices as one by one they are rescued from death. There is no such thing as saving this world as a ship might be saved from destruction with all upon her. It is rather like a sinking ship from which lives are rescued one by one.

#### *No Respect of Class or Race*

The church must never lose this recognition of the value of the individual. To do so is to lose touch with the very essence of the purpose of God in giving Christ to die for us. Far indeed from the truth is that pernicious thought that has so long troubled the church of God, that the gift of Jesus is only to a favored class. With the Lord there are no distinctions. Race and color and class are all alike to Him. Past all the barriers that human notions of class and distinction have erected between man and man, His seeking love reaches for that which is of inestimable worth in His sight, the soul of the individual; and "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38, 39.

It is wonderful to know that whatever my color, whatever my race, whatever my class, whatever my condition, the Son of God "loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." God loves the world, and because He loved the world He gave His only Son; but in giving His Son He had *me* in mind. All this, not because I was of some class or color that fitted me to be so treated, but because I was of a class unfit to be noticed by Him or ever to be brought to Him. I can never understand it, but I can respond to such love by yielding myself and my all to Him. I can express my gratitude for His love by loving my brethren.

#### *Understand Love by Experience*

God's love for us is understood best, and really only, when it is experienced. It is a fact, whether we experience it

or not, but it is a fact of mighty transforming power when it is received in a personal way, and experienced in personal living. If we would experience its power, we must know its reality in our own personal relationship to God.

#### *Love Differs From Benevolence*

There is a wide difference between benevolence and love. God gave because He loved, but observe the extent to which He gave. He gave His *only-begotten* Son. He had nothing left. He had no more to give. Love is essentially sacrificial. Its gifts are measured not only by what is yielded, but also equally by what is left. The gifts of benevolence are but part of an abundance, and are not essentially sacrificial. These two qualities were in evidence at the treasury where Jesus watched the benevolent rich casting in their gifts. Among them came "a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites." Concerning her Jesus said, "Of a truth I say unto you, This poor widow cast in more than they all: for all these did of their superfluity cast in unto the gifts; but she of her want did cast in all the living that she had." Luke 21:1-4, A. R. V.

By this it is evident that while benevolence is accepted and approved of God, love is commended. The one is helpful, the other is sacrificial. God gave *all*, because He so loved. This poor widow gave *all*, because she so loved Him. Both gifts were sacrificial. God's gift was without price. Her gift was but two mites. But the precious Son of God, the One given to all, seeing her cast in those two mites, recognized a love in her heart that was heavenly, and said, "This poor widow cast in more than they all."

The smallest gift of love is worth infinitely more than all the abundance that benevolence bestows, for while benevolence gives with kindly purpose, but often with no thought of sacrificing, love yields up all. Love gives, because in it there is a giving impulse. Its desire to impart, to give sacrificially, is the proof of its reality. Yearning to have us possess that which is best and eternal, God gave sacrificially. He yielded up all. This is the proof of His love. He gave, not grudgingly, but fully, abundantly. He gave *everything*.

#### *Love Believes and Obeys*

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another;" "because as He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:11, 17. But how can we love our brother if the love of God is not in us? In return for His love we are to believe. Believe in whom?—In His only-begotten Son. What does it mean to believe in Him? The only way that we can believe in Him is to love Him and obey Him. Love does not treat its object with disrespect. True love delights to serve, and to serve obediently. Every sin is a denial of love for God. Every act of obedience is an evidence of love, for love is the fulfilling of the law. "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me." "If a

man love Me, he will keep My words. . . . He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings." John 14:21, 23, 24.

#### *True Love Trusts*

True love trusts the one who is its object. Because God so loved us, and gave His all, He claims our belief in the One He gave. It is not possible for us at the same time, however, both to believe in Him and to distrust Him. When we love Him, we trust Him. When we trust Him, we follow Him. When we follow Him, we are accounted worthy of Him, and following Him means trusting Him with our all. If we trust Him not, and therefore follow Him not, we are not worthy of Him, for we do not love Him. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me." Matt. 10:37, 38.

#### *Delight in Service*

Love delights to serve. A life of obedience to God is a life of service. It was prophesied of Jesus: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God." But when Jesus came, obediently doing the will of His Father, He was among men as one who "serveth," and His sacrifice required that He give His life a ransom for many.

Love in our hearts begets the desire to serve. Desire to serve with any other motive is perilous. Let us notice how tenderly this lesson is brought to us by the Master. On that solemn occasion, when with the emblems of His shed blood and broken body He was seeking to teach His disciples the wonderful truth concerning His death, there arose among them strife as to "which of them should be accounted the greatest." Jesus first of all revealed to them how poorly the thing for which they contended had served the Gentiles. He next revealed to them that true greatness comes not by the exercise of authority, but by service, showing them by the force of example that His own greatness was revealed in service. Then turning to Peter, he taught them all by His words to this disciple that only those who love truly can serve greatly.

#### *In Spiritual Peril Without Love*

"The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Luke 22:31, 32. Without the love of a truly converted heart, Peter was in great peril. But when he had the true love of a converted soul he could comfort and strengthen his brethren. Peter did not recognize either his peril or his need. He had a desire to serve his Master, but in his heart was a love of preeminence greater than love of his Lord. He was sure that he was ready to serve even to death, but only love that yields all

can take a man to death in service. Peter did not have that love, and before the cock crew twice, he had thrice shamefully denied his Lord.

But the experience of Peter was not closed with his denial. The Lord who loved him and had yielded all for him, being risen again from the tomb, said to Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" Peter, answering, said, "Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Then Jesus bade him show forth the fact of his love in loving service—"Feed My lambs." The second and the third time Jesus said again, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" and each time the Master bade Peter serve His children. If Peter now was converted and truly loved, there was only one way by which he could make that manifest,—by humble, truehearted service.

#### *Love Strong as Death*

The Master's next words revealed to Peter that the service to which he was thus being called demanded his death; and having thus spoken, Jesus then bade him, "Follow Me." Trustfully, humbly, heroically, Peter took up his cross and followed, for into his heart had come the urge of love that had yielded all. The following of his Lord was, for him, even unto death upon the cross. He gave all. His was no longer a benevolent sentiment that wished his Master well, desired to be helpful, yet stopped short of sacrificial giving, but rather love, strong as death, that trusted, and served, and gave till there was nothing left.

It seems appropriate that this same man, some thirty years later, should exhort the brethren to let love prevail in their hearts. Out of the fullness of an experience that had deepened with the years, he wrote: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." 1 Peter 3:8, 9.

(Reading for Sunday, December 8)

## *The Righteousness of God*

BY W. G. TURNER

"SEEK ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." Matt. 6:33.

These words of clear direction, falling from the lips of Jesus nineteen centuries ago, apply with undiminished force to us who now live. By reading the verses immediately preceding our text we find that in God's sight above all things temporal, such as food and clothing, stands man's need of the righteousness of God. The possession of this righteousness is essential to all who are ultimately to enter the kingdom of God. By Jesus Himself, in the words of our introductory text, its possession is coupled with

#### *Are We Dwelling in Love?*

My dear brethren and sisters, the love of God which passeth all our understanding, gave all to save us from perishing. Are we, His remnant people, allowing that love to fill our hearts and capture our souls? Are we letting that love garrison our hearts against coldness and indifference, strife and division? Are we showing by our own love and our sacrificial service that we are indeed the children of God, that the love of God in our hearts has begotten us again unto a lively hope?

There is great need for the Divine Spirit to come to us anew at this time of prayer. Our hearts need to be revived, and our spirits renewed. Our love for God and for His truth, for His people and His work, needs to be rekindled. Our love for our brethren in the church needs to be made perfect. Instead of misunderstanding and separation and wrong, there needs to be love and unity and uprightness of heart. May not the blessing of God come to us now with healing and peace of mind and heart, and joy in the Holy Ghost?

#### *Boldness in the Day of Judgment*

The end of all things is at hand. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:16, 17. Let us therefore keep ourselves "in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Of a truth the Spirit of God is now pressing upon us the heart-searching question, "Lovest thou Me?" Dare we thrust from us such an appeal? Can we contemplate yielding our heart's truest devotion to any other, or trusting its keeping, even for a single minute, to another? Let us without delay resolve to answer from the heart, "Yea, Lord, I yield my all to Thee. Let my life from this day forward give unmistakable proof that I do indeed sincerely love Thee."

the kingdom. In speaking of the entrance of the redeemed into the presence of God, Isaiah the prophet links righteousness and the kingdom in the words, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Isa. 26:2. And Paul, in writing of the gospel of salvation, says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: . . . for therein is the righteousness of God revealed." Rom. 1:16, 17.

We notice that it is specifically stated that God's righteousness is that which man must possess. The emphasis on the thought of *God's righteousness* suggests

the possibility of a righteousness that is not of God seeking to manifest itself as sufficient to meet man's need.

#### *Man's Righteousness Versus God's Righteousness*

In that wonderful sermon on the mount, from which our opening text is taken, Jesus spoke of such a righteousness which was wholly insufficient to admit its possessors to the kingdom of God. "I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:20. These scribes and Pharisees were people who professed much and who seemingly did much in order to be good; but in God's sight neither their profession nor their practice availed anything, and ultimately, unless a true conception of God's righteousness and a change in heart were experienced by them, they would be forbidden the kingdom of God.

This profession of man's righteousness as distinct from God's righteousness is likened by Isaiah in chapter 64, verse 6, to "filthy rags," while the righteousness of God, imparted to His saints who shall enter the kingdom, is stated by John to be as "fine linen, clean and white." Rev. 19:8. It would thus appear in contrast with God's righteousness, "linen, clean and white," that man's righteousness, "filthy rags," is nothing but unrighteousness.

#### *What Is Unrighteousness?*

For a moment let us notice what in the mind of God this unrighteousness is. "All unrighteousness is sin." 1 John 5:17. This is a simple, clear statement. "All unrighteousness is sin."

What is sin? The answer comes equally clear. "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. If all unrighteousness is sin and sin is the transgression of the law, then the conclusion of necessity follows that all unrighteousness is the transgression of the law.

We proceed. Of what law is sin the transgression? "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7. Paul was the speaker. He lived and was converted this side of the cross. For those who tell us that the ten commandment law was abrogated at the cross, it is to be noted that what pointed out sin to him will point out sin to us. Paul, who lived in the same dispensation as do we, said that the law which said, "Thou shalt not covet," was the law which pointed out sin to him. This was the ten commandment law.

With these texts—"All unrighteousness is sin," "Sin is the transgression of the law," "I had not known sin . . . except the [ten commandment] law had said, Thou shalt not covet"—we are brought to the inevitable conclusion that according to Scripture all unrighteousness is the transgression of the ten commandments. We find positive confirmation on this position by looking at it from another angle.

#### *What Is God's Righteousness?*

If it is true that unrighteousness is the transgression of the ten commandments, would it not be true that righteousness is the keeping of the ten commandments? We discover this to be a fact by turning to Psalms 119:172 and reading these words, "All Thy commandments are righteousness." And in verse 138 it says, "Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteousness [margin]." If all God's commandments and testimonies are righteousness and a man obeys them, it is recognized that he will be doing righteousness, even the righteousness of God.

If a man kept God's commandments in their entirety from his first moment of conscious life till the last moment of that life, he would be a righteous man, for he would be doing God's righteousness. This is borne out by John in his first epistle, chapter 3, verse 7. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He [God] is righteous." We are thus driven to the conclusion that the standard of God's righteousness is His ten commandment law, and the righteousness of God becomes man's by perfect obedience thereto. This is borne out by reasoning from both the negative and the affirmative side, and is confirmed by God in that statement of John which declares that the one who does righteousness, i. e., keeps the law, "is righteous, even as He [God] is righteous."

#### *How Many Are Righteous?*

The question now arises, How many are there who have rendered this obedience and by so doing attained to God's righteousness, which is essential to admittance into the kingdom of God? We turn to Romans 3:10, and read these words, "There is none righteous, no, not one." The reason is given in verse 23, "For all have sinned [transgressed the law of God], and come short of the glory of God." The standard is there, but not one has attained to it, for all have transgressed the law of God; therefore "there is none righteous, no, not one."

Earnestly longing to enter ultimately the kingdom of God through the possession of His righteousness, and faced with the necessity of conforming to the law of God, and meeting the statement that all are unrighteous, what shall we now do?

Some may say, "Why, begin at once to keep the law, God's standard of His righteousness." That would be all right were it not that we each have a past, and that past will always stand in the way of our attainment. To illustrate:

Let us suppose that at twenty years of age a man is unconverted and dishonest—a thief. Then he is converted and decides to steal no more, nor does he steal again. Can his future honesty ever make up for his past dishonesty? No, he can be plainly honest, but that theft of the past will remain ever against him, even though he were able from henceforth to live a life of perfect obedience, which he could not do in his own strength.

Again, the law is never intended to save men. By reading Romans 3:20, "By the law is the knowledge of sin," we find the law but reveals the wrong; it does not provide the remedy. James, in his epistle, chapter 1, verses 22-25, likens God's law to a mirror. For what purpose is the mirror? Is it not merely to point out the defect or witness to the perfection? Never can a mirror remove a stain or change the appearance. That is not its purpose. It simply shows the defect, but never removes it. So with the law. It stands before humanity as God's great mirror, revealing man's need of cleansing, but it never provides the means. In other words, our law keeping in the future can in no way atone for our law breaking in the past.

#### *The Way Out*

What then shall we do? In our need and in our earnestness to attain to the righteousness of God we again turn to the gospel wherein "the righteousness of God is revealed." In 1 Peter 2:22 we find these simple words concerning Jesus, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." If He did no sin, then He must have kept His Father's law. For "sin is the transgression of the law." Jesus kept that law. "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10. As He did no sin, ever keeping the law of God, He was therefore righteous, possessing the righteousness of God; for "he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He [God] is righteous." 1 John 3:7.

It is helpful to discover One who possessed this righteousness; but the question naturally arises, How may we who have broken God's law attain to God's righteousness? Encouraged in the discovery of One born in the likeness of sinful flesh who did no sin and who, having kept His Father's commandments, was therefore righteous, even with the righteousness of God, we turn the pages of the word of God, and in Jeremiah we find this statement relative to Jesus, "He shall be called The Lord *Our* Righteousness." The thought immediately seizes us, Is it likely that God in some way has made it possible for the righteous, law-keeping life of His Son to be applied to cover our unrighteous, law-breaking life? For such case there must first be the willingness of this One, Himself sinless, to take over or carry our sins.

By turning to Isaiah 53:5, 6, we read this familiar and wondrously beautiful statement referring to Jesus: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

The transfer of sin is thus lovingly provided for in the plan of God for man's salvation. The wages of sin, which is death, is met by the One on whom sin is laid,—Jesus, who did no sin.

Jesus bore our iniquities, suffering on the cross the penalty for our sin. Of Him it is written, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." 1 Peter 2:24. This righteousness made possible for mankind is God's righteousness, "for He [God] hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, [He] who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21.

How wonderfully true it is that "Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His."—*"The Desire of Ages,"* page 25.

What a blessed transaction on behalf of guilty man! While he is seeking to be righteous, but possessing no power to attain to the standard because of his past sins for which he could not in himself atone, ample provision has been made for his justification. The clarity of God's loving plan was known to the prophets of old. Isaiah caught the vision of it in his day, and in chapter 61, verse 10, we find him using this expression of joy; "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." In other words, the filthy rags of man's righteousness, which in God's sight is unrighteousness, are covered, by the gift of Jesus, with "linen, clean and white," His own blessed law-keeping life. Thus covered we stand before God's law justified by Christ's blood, the law witnessing that we are cleansed "for the remission of sins that are past." Rom. 3:21-28, 31.

"Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. . . . Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

#### *The Standard Unchanged*

This transaction in no way changes the law, the standard. Rather it establishes the law. The whole change comes through the blood of Jesus applied to our sins, and not by changing the law to

meet the need. Christ paid the price with His own lifeblood. Justification is a free gift. "As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18.

Thus Christ's life is imputed to the sinner to cover the sins of the past. To impute means "to place to the credit of one something that does not rightly belong to him." In the beginning we stand, beggars all, clothed in filthy rags, but longing to be righteous. Christ holds out a robe of pure linen, His own sinless life, and without money and without price offers it to all who will accept it. It is the robe of His righteousness. We by faith take that robe, and by virtue of His blood are declared righteous, even possessing the righteousness of God. We are thus brought into conformity with the law of God, and "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

We being cleansed and justified for "the remission of sins that are past" by the shed blood of Jesus, and being thus brought into conformity with the right-

eousness of God, it is now essential that we should be kept from further sin by the reception of His *imparted*, or shared, life.

Let us remember that "the righteousness by which we are justified is *imputed*; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is *imparted*. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven."

With praise to God for "His unspeakable gift," and with faith sufficient to appropriate the righteousness of Jesus to cleanse, let us go on from faith to faith, accepting Him as our life, and as a living Saviour who imparts power to keep clean that which He has cleansed by His shed blood and His imputed life.

May the Lord make the prayer of Paul, recorded in Ephesians 3:17-19, a very real and constant experience to each of us: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

(Reading for Monday, December 9)

## *The Christian's Business---Winning Souls*

BY GLENN CALKINS

ONE of the greatest Christian hymns ever written was inspired by its author's vision of God's matchless love, as revealed in the gospel.

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a tribute far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands 'my life, my soul, my all.'"

The "whole realm of nature" is indeed "a tribute far too small" to offer in exchange for the love of God in His great longing to save fallen man. The astronomer's telescope reveals millions of stars circling in their orbits, and the photographic plate reveals unnumbered millions more. Is, then, a lost soul that has been redeemed worth more than all these? The writer of this hymn has inferred as much. And what he pens is in harmony with the words of the psalmist as he, reviewing the vastness of creation's realm, exclaimed:

"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" Ps. 8:3, 4.

A soul saved in the kingdom of God is worth all his salvation costs; even the universe is not of sufficient value to redeem him. All the gold and precious stones of earth would be "a tribute far too small." The only price that can possibly purchase the redemption of the fallen is the blood of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And, my brethren and sisters, all the tears, all the prayers, and all the en-

deavors that we may put forth in behalf of these needy ones is likewise a tribute far too small. Poor, tired, discouraged souls everywhere are crying out for deliverance, not knowing which way to turn. Recently I came in contact with one of God's children who had fallen to the very lowest depths. Hers was one of the most tragic and touching stories to which I ever listened. And then, under the drawing influence of the Holy Spirit, to see that soul lift her eyes heavenward, catching there a little glimpse of the mercy and love of God for her, brought tears of joy to my eyes. Our work today is to seek out, to encourage, and to lift up those who have fallen in sin. That is "the Christian's business."

#### *Made Fishers of Men*

In Mark 1:17 Christ declares: "Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." The Christian's business, then, is winning souls. The word "business," according to the dictionary, means "a pursuit or occupation." Hence our pursuit or occupation should be fishing for men and making disciples, as Jesus said, "of all nations." "All nations" is all-inclusive. It embraces not only those of other lands, but likewise those living close by us, perhaps in our own neighborhoods, in our homes. It means speaking the words of life whenever and wherever opportunity presents itself. "What is your business?" asked an unbelieving stranger of a man he had just met. The answer came kindly, unhesitatingly, and without the slightest degree of apology: "My

business is doing the work to which my Saviour has called me as a 'fisher of men.' This is my *business*. But while diligently pursuing my business, I am making my living by manufacturing and selling stoves."

What would be the eternal result if we who are believers in the soon coming of our Lord made soul winning the business aim of our life? We are told by the servant of the Lord that every business transaction should be fragrant with the Spirit of Christ. We are admonished over and over that all contacts with our fellow men, whether business or social, should breathe forth the love and mercy of our heavenly Father. Every day brings opportunities to demonstrate these qualities in our lives.

Only recently a worldly man came to my office on business. His mind was perplexed and confused. The high-tension competition that confronted him in his business had unnerved him. It was evident he was laboring under some great burden. After we had completed our business matters, I asked him about the problems that were pressing so heavily upon him, and then by the grace of Christ I endeavored to point him to the love of God as his only source of comfort and relief. It was all a new experience to him, but his heart responded. I suggested that if he would kneel down by my desk, I would consider it a privilege to pray with him that God might somehow lead him out of his discouragement and lift him above it all. The Holy Spirit witnessed to the prayer, and the man was deeply touched. He left with his face shining, and with a new hope glowing in his heart.

Jesus is coming soon. Though we are living in the darkness of earth's midnight hour, the dawn of the glorious day is even now breaking before our tired and weary eyes. And hungry souls everywhere are longing for light and deliverance. The seed we plant today will bring tomorrow's reaping.

All will remember how Jesus, while still a mere lad, was upbraided by His mother for not going with them on their homeward journey from the Passover feast at Jerusalem. He answered, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

In "Gospel Workers," beginning on page 111, the servant of the Lord, commenting on this saying of Jesus, says:

"The same devotion, the same consecration, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. He left His home of security and peace, left the glory that He had with the Father before the world was, left His position upon the throne of the universe, and went forth, a suffering, tempted man; went forth in solitude, to sow in tears, to water with His blood the seed of life for a lost world. His servants in like manner must go forth to sow. . . . Old associations must be broken up, plans of life relinquished, earthly hopes surrendered. In toil and tears,

in solitude and through sacrifice, must the seed be sown."

Our Father's business is important and urgent. A humble Christian overheard a worldly businessman tell how he had that day made a "big deal" in lumber, and how he had profited several thousand dollars as the result. This brought a rebellious feeling into his heart, for, thought he, "In one day this man has made more than I shall get in an entire year." Then a voice seemed to say within him, "Where have you been, and what have you been doing today?" He answered, "To the home of a sinner, and that soul has decided for Christ." "What is a soul worth?" probed the voice within. He answered, "Why, a soul is worth more than the whole world, with all its lumber and all its wealth." Then said the voice, "You have put over a bigger deal than this man. Why be envious?" Yes, brethren, our Father's business is the biggest and grandest in all the world, and His promises are faithful and sure to those who enter into the sowing and the reaping.

#### *Deliverance Found on the Overland Limited*

Some time ago I was traveling on one of the overland trains. I had met the Pullman conductor on a previous trip and had placed in his hands some reading material. After the train had left the station, he came and sat down with me, and began talking of the things he had read in the literature sent him. Soon he was called away. I noticed the porter in charge of that car had endeavored to listen to what we were saying. He soon came over to my seat and asked,

"Excuse me, sir, are you a Seventh-day Adventist?"

"Why do you ask?" I replied.

"Well," he said, "I thought you were from what I overheard you saying to the conductor."

I inquired, "What do you know about Seventh-day Adventists?"

"Well," he said, "my neighbor is a Seventh-day Adventist, and he has been teaching me and endeavoring to help me in studying my Bible, and I have come to the conclusion that his interpretation of the Bible is correct."

"Have you become a Seventh-day Adventist? Have you joined the church?" I asked.

"No, sir, I have not. I wish above everything in this world that I could, but I cannot."

Judging that he thought he could not keep the Sabbath and retain his position with the Pullman Company, I began to tell him that he must have faith in God to step out and obey Him, trusting Him for his temporal needs.

"Oh," he said, "it isn't my work that concerns me. But there is a habit that has gripped me, and I cannot overcome it. I have tried and tried and tried, but I cannot be a Seventh-day Adventist and continue to smoke—and I cannot stop smoking."

I told him of my experience in days gone by, before becoming a Christian, how I was a confirmed smoker and never

was able to stop until the living power of Jesus came into my heart.

"Oh, I wish I could have an experience like that," he said. "My brother," I said, "you can. The same Jesus that delivered me will deliver you."

"Do you think He will? Do you think He loves a poor old man like me?"

"My brother, our heavenly Father is no respecter of persons. Surely He loves you. He died for you."

I then asked him if there was any one using the private compartment at the end of the car. He said it was empty. "Let us go and seek and find deliverance right now." We went into that little room and got down on our knees, and as that limited train pounded along over the steel rails, we cried out to God for deliverance. And I am happy to tell you that God delivered that man, and he is now a Sabbathkeeper rejoicing in the truth. I meet him occasionally as I travel over the field, and his kindly face is always beaming with a holy joy. The Spirit of prophecy says:

"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. . . . 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 Acts of the Apostles*, p. 109.

Here is a personal message to each one of us that cannot be overlooked. Remember, it says angels stand ready to lead earnesthearted witnesses to those who are looking wistfully to heaven and who are longing for deliverance from the heartaches, the disappointments, and the sins of this world. They are waiting for you, for me. "Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." Isa. 43:12.

#### *One Step to Jesus, Then Walking With Him*

Some months ago I was standing in the office of a prominent hotel man in Southern California. We were talking over certain business matters. After we had completed the items in hand, I endeavored to turn our conversation toward world conditions and their spiritual application. He seemed a bit interested, but as he was busy I did not remain long. Two or three weeks later I was again in his office, this time in company with one of our doctors. As we were about to leave, I turned to the man, making some comment regarding our former conversation, and said:

"My friend, you may not be a Christian; you may not believe the Bible, but I do; and these things taking place in the world today mean much to me, for they are but the unfolding scroll of prophecy."

He replied that there had long been in his heart a desire to know something about the Bible, but that no one had endeavored to teach him. This came as a challenge to me, and I determined that

this man should know more of the word of God.

"My friend," I said, "would you think it out of place if the doctor and I were to kneel down here in your office and ask God to direct your steps, and lead your mind into such channels as will bring to you the comfort and hope the Scriptures contain?"

"No," he replied, "I should be very glad if you would do so." We knelt down, and a short prayer was offered. The man seemed very grateful.

Some three or four weeks later I received word that this man wished to see me. When I met him, I could see that a mighty transformation had taken place. He held out his hand, and calling me by my first name said,

"I am so glad to see you again. Do you remember when you and the doctor were here, and you suggested that we have a word of prayer?"

"Yes."

"As a result," he continued, "a great joy came into my soul, and a new hope. That night at home I felt impressed to read in the Bible. I had none, but secured one. As I read portions, the impression grew on me that I should pray, something I had never done." Then with tears streaming down his cheeks he said, "And now for the past few days I have been getting up forty minutes earlier every morning to read my Bible and pray, and, O, such joy as has come into my soul!"

That was about two years ago. Here is a portion of a letter that I later received from this dear man:

"In my quiet times with God in the early morning your name comes frequently to my mind, and I thank Him for the wondrous fellowship with you. How I prize the gift from you, 'Steps to Christ,' and the Morning Watch Calendar! . . . A step to Jesus, a step for Jesus, and a step with Jesus is all that my daily life consists of. As I obey and do His will, I am learning rapidly of the doctrines, but I am sticking to the simplicity of the childlike way. Just a step at a time, and the next step follows easily. I am living in the ever present, taking no thought for tomorrow beyond definitely committing all of that to Him, so that when the future becomes the present, I am ready for it, keeping step with Jesus.

"I have had to be very diligent in business, but I have been fervent in spirit, serving the Lord also. So much of what I have said seems to be boasting, but it is not. It is through the word of my testimony, plus the 'blood of the Lamb,' that I am overcoming. I have only to take one look at my 'filthy rags' which I have exchanged for the glorious mantle of Christ, to humble myself in the dust. I have written this for the glory of God, and that your joy, dear brother, may be full."

#### *A Bright Spot in the Explorer's Life*

A few months ago I visited the Hawaiian Islands, now a part of the Pacific Union Conference. I was placed in a

cabin with two men. I had hoped aboard ship to be used of the Lord in some way as a witness for Him. One man I saw little of, as he did not reach the cabin usually until midnight or past. The other, a doctor, I found a very fine man. He was a member of the staff of one of the best-known hospitals in America, one whose name commands respect in medical circles. He was traveling second class, he told me, because he found the people to be more congenial and friendly. He was an explorer, a man who had done a great deal of traveling. He had spent two years with Admiral Byrd in the Antarctic, wintering with him in Little America. He was now on his way to the Antarctic regions. He was to be met in Honolulu by another noted Antarctic explorer and the two were going on to Auckland, New Zealand, where they were to be met by a Norwegian vessel equipped for exploration in the Antarctic.

We began talking on subjects of common interest. I told him of our medical school, and he, being a medical man, was deeply interested. I told him about our sanitariums, our dispensaries and hospitals that encircle the earth, and of the consecrated nurses and doctors and helpers that staff these institutions. I told him of our school work, and of the triumphs of our noble missionaries in all lands. His interest grew. And then I began to unfold before him the message itself. I told him a bit of my own personal experience, of how I had, a few years ago, turned aside from the world, and of the joy and peace that had come into my heart as a result. As we drew near to Honolulu, I was praying that I might leave a parting message that would impress more deeply on his mind and heart the truths we had been discussing.

The last night, as we were getting ready for bed, I turned the conversation again toward his family. I recalled to him how he had told me of his great love for them. Then I said, "Look here, Doctor, you are headed for a dangerous journey. You may never return to see your family again." His face sobered and he replied, "That is true. I know only too well the dangers that lie ahead of me." "Now," I said, "this may be the last time we shall ever meet. Tomorrow morning we reach Honolulu, you to journey on and I to remain there for a time. Would you like to kneel down with me while I offer a word of prayer, asking the Lord to bless your loved ones, to care for them and to care for you, and to make you a blessing to them and to all others?" He said he would, and we knelt down together.

I prayed a short prayer, dwelling especially on the thought that God somehow would use this man to the glory of His name and to the salvation of souls. After I had finished, I hesitated a moment, and he uttered five words, the only one of which I could understand being the last, "Amen." As we arose he turned toward the porthole, wiping his eyes. Then clasping my hand, he said:

"My friend, I have had many experiences in my travels around the world and in dangerous places, but this experience has been one of the bright spots in my life. I am deeply grateful to you. Will you continue to pray for me?"

"Yes, Doctor, I shall be glad to. But I want to ask you to do something for me. Will you do it?"

"If it is possible, I will," he replied.

"If I place in your hands something to read, will you read it with an open heart, believing God will bring you the message that it contains?" He said he would. "Then if opportunity presents itself this coming winter when you are snowed in with those men down in the Antarctic, will you read it to them?" He said he would if opportunity presented itself. So we went to bed.

The next morning we landed in Honolulu. As he bade me good-by he said, "Don't forget." I went over to the mission office and secured a red limp leather copy of "The Great Controversy," and wrote a personal message on the flyleaf. With this I placed a copy of "Our Changing World," and taking them both to the purser of the ship, I asked him to place them in the hands of the doctor the next morning after the ship had left the harbor. What will come of it, God only knows. The seed has been sown, the results are with Him.

The work of individual soul winning is the greatest work that God permits men to do. It was Christ's own preferred method of working, and it is our most effective way. The greatest sermon in all the world is the influence of an earnest, consecrated child of God witnessing to the mighty power of the grace of Christ in his own life. And remember, brethren and sisters, perplexed, confused, discouraged men and women are everywhere crying for deliverance, and God longs to use the humblest of His children to reach them. He longs to use you, and He longs to use me.

This is our Father's business—winning souls. Shall not this be the cry of our hearts:

"Stir me, oh, stir me, Lord! I care not how;

But stir my heart in passion for the world.

Stir me to give, to go—but most to pray.

Stir till Thy blood-red banner be unfurled

O'er lands that still in heathen darkness lie—

O'er deserts where no cross is lifted high."



WE are to give the last warning of God to men, and what should be our earnestness in studying the Bible, and our zeal in spreading the light! Let every soul who has received the divine illumination seek to impart it. Let the workers go from house to house, opening the Bible to the people, circulating the publications, telling others of the light that has blessed their own souls.—"Gospel Workers," p. 353.

(Reading for Tuesday, December 10)

## The Challenge to Our Youth

BY STEEN RASMUSSEN

IN His infinite love, God calls upon the youth of our day to heed the Saviour's appeal: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." John 11:28. Living in an age when wickedness is increasing at an alarming rate, when not only the youth, but the masses of humanity generally are practicing and even defending sin and iniquity, it behooves the young people of the advent movement to heed the Master's call and take time to weigh carefully spiritual values in the light of present-day events and tendencies.

On the one hand, we see the world rushing on in its mad race for power and pleasure toward ruin and destruction. On the other hand, do we see that drawing nearer to God and that thirsting and hungering for the living water and the bread of life that is so very necessary for our spiritual growth and development?

### A Bible Picture

The apostle vividly portrayed our present age when he wrote: "Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. 3:2-5. Yet in the midst of this perplexing and distressing situation the Lord promises: "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions." Acts 2:17. From this statement it is evident that while the days are evil, we have also come into a time of unprecedented opportunity to the youth of the advent movement, when the challenge for a complete surrender and consecration must be sounded in our homes and our churches.

Where are we standing as individuals and as an organized army of youth? There are undoubtedly many who have been overtaken by the rush of the incoming tide of soul-destroying influences, and are drifting hither and thither, having lost their hope, their faith, and their courage. Others, perhaps, are not fully aware of the seriousness of the havoc which the stream of harmful amusements, pernicious literature, and questionable companionship is bringing in its violent course.

In the midst of lowered standards in the world generally, of increasing apostasy from truth and virtue, we rejoice to see among our youth a strong and noble company of young men and women who manifest in their daily lives the sobriety, judgment, and loyalty to principle which are an inseparable part of Christian character.

Scanning the pages of Holy Writ, we observe that during past ages God's chal-

lenge to youth met a noble and hearty response. Characters like Abel, Joseph, Samuel, David, Esther, Ruth, Daniel, and the three worthies, will, till the end of time, continue to inspire and animate young people to live the Christlike life.

### The Divine Challenge

The challenge to Queen Esther, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" is a challenge to Seventh-day Adventist young people today. We are here for just such a time as this. Just as Daniel and his three companions remained firm and true to God's standards in their day, so we in our generation are to show our fidelity and loyalty when tests and trials beset us.

A noted educator has strikingly remarked, "The world goes down to destruction, not because of any lack of knowledge, but because of lack of character." Therefore, "the greatest want of the world," and of this people, "is the want of men,—men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall."—*Education*, p. 57.

We are persuaded that parents, teachers, ministers, church officers, and in fact all who love and have an interest in our youth, will join hands in putting forth a united effort for the salvation, the preservation, and the training of our young people for Christ, will lend their influence to maintain the high and holy Christian ideals characterizing the advent movement, and by both precept and example will help to safeguard the heritage of the church.

At the same time we appeal to our young people in all parts of the world to give of their strength, their talent, and their enthusiasm to God. This is no time to play or parley with sin, to tamper with the enemy's counterfeit goods, to become engrossed with the allurements and attractions of an increasingly vile and irreligious world. More than a mere interest in gospel themes and a superficial knowledge of the teachings of the word of God is needed in keeping the soul and life pure from the taint and defilement of the world. Nothing less than a burning passion for the things of God will meet the need. We must strive for the experience expressed by the psalmist: "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up." Ps. 69:9. Nothing that is manufactured or put on will meet the requirements of God in our battle against sin and temptation.

### The Supreme Need

The supreme need of our young, and of all the children of God, is, first, to

possess for themselves that spiritual vitality and power exemplified so impressively in the life of our Master. There must be a real revival of spiritual life, a mighty resurgence of that life which cometh down from above; that complete surrender, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:5. In the words of the apostle, the challenge to complete surrender reads: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1.

The maintenance and development of this spiritual life, this daily personal experience with God, and this "reasonable service," mean a struggle with self and with the world, but the promise is that we can be more than conquerors through the blood of the Lamb. In "Messages to Young People," page 204, we are told:

"Satan is a vigilant foe, intent upon his purpose of leading the youth to a course of action entirely contrary to that which God would approve. He well knows that there is no other class that can do as much good as young men and young women who are consecrated to God."

The marshaling of the archenemy's evil forces constitutes a mighty challenge to the advent youth. Our great General, who never lost a battle, is also preparing an army for the struggle which lies just ahead. Surely this is our time of opportunity to throw ourselves without any reservation whatever into the battle for truth and right. Again we read:

"Today He [God] is calling for young men and women who are strong and active in mind and body. He desires them to bring into the conflict against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places, their fresh, healthy powers of brain, bone, and muscle."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 538.

In this gigantic struggle on the part of the enemy for the possession of our youthful strength and talent, every young person must guard well the avenues to the soul. Sentinel duty must be performed, lest the enemy gain the ascendancy in such matters as appetite, reading, dress, amusements, sex, sentiment, and companionship. Youth, the vestibule of manhood and womanhood, is the time when decisions are made which determine the ultimate course of life. It is the time when the helpful counsel from those of mature years and experience is needed, and should be heeded.

### What Do We Read?

We are living in a reading age. The bookstores and bookstalls of all lands are filled with cheap and light reading matter which does not deserve the name literature. Intemperance in reading has become one of the evils of the age. Just as alcoholic beverages and tobacco work havoc in the tissues of the human body, so trashy reading matter poisons the thoughts, enfeebles the moral and intel-



lectual powers, benumbs, unbalances, and paralyzes the mind, and in the end, if persisted in, robs the soul of all its spiritual vitality. This warning has been sent us:

"Satan knows that to a great degree the mind is affected by that upon which it feeds. He is seeking to lead both the youth and those of mature age to read storybooks, tales, and other literature. The readers of such literature become unfitted for the duties lying before them. They live an unreal life, and have no desire to search the Scriptures, to feed upon the heavenly manna." "Resolutely discard all trashy reading. It will not strengthen your spirituality, but will introduce into the mind sentiments that pervert the imagination, causing you to think less of Jesus and to dwell less upon His precious lessons."—*Messages to Young People*, pp. 271, 273.

Shall we not put this harmful thing, cheap reading, away once and forever? In God's strength we can do it. With His help let us determine to do it.

#### *Standards of Social Purity?*

Jesus must present before the Father a church without spot and without wrinkle. It is the enemy's constant endeavor to frustrate this plan of God. He makes it appear as though the standards of social purity are too high. It is his object to benumb the conscience and to pollute the body temple of the child of God. We are living in a fast age. Many young people have lost their hold on God through the deceitfulness of the sins that defile the body. We feel it our duty to sound a warning in this respect. Not only has the enemy broken down the ramparts here and there, but he has endeavored to establish himself within the fold. The King's highway must be cleared, cost what it may; and the church, as well as our living temple, must be kept pure from every defilement. The Lord foresaw this insidious drive by the enemy, and He has given us this solemn warning:

"None can be Christians and indulge in habits which debilitate the system, bring on a state of prostration of the vital forces, and end in making a complete wreck of beings formed in the image of God. This moral pollution will certainly bring its reward. The cause must produce the results."—*A Solemn Appeal*, p. 75.

This solemn warning is in harmony with what the apostle Paul wrote in his epistle to the church at Corinth: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." 1 Cor. 9:27. It is just as necessary for each one today to train the mind in thoughts of purity, and to avoid all appearance of evil.

#### *The Field of Amusement*

Another field of exploitation by the enemy is that of amusement. Nearly every city, town, and village today has its moving picture theater, its dance and billiard hall, its bar or gambling house. The attendance at questionable places of amusement should not be indulged in by

Seventh-day Adventist young people. Toying and tampering with the emotions and the affections of the soul, is a very dangerous experimentation. It is playing with fire which may destroy the life. The lessening of will power inevitably follows when one persists in going to questionable places of amusement. It is impossible to retain sterling characters and extraordinary strength, to remain virtuous and pure, and to develop a taste for the good, and at the same time imbibe that which is impure and so often disgusting. These modern evils should be shunned as one would shun the leprosy. Make up your mind and settle it with God in prayer that nothing shall be taken in through your eye that will in any way mar or defile God's masterpiece. Any amusement that tends to weaken the individual in his fight against the forces of the adversary, is purchased at a very high price.

Another disguise of the enemy is torn aside in this message to us:

"Satan makes special efforts to lead them [the youth] to happiness in worldly amusements, and to justify themselves by endeavoring to show that these amusements are harmless, innocent, and even important for health. He presents the path of holiness as difficult, while the paths of worldly pleasure are strewn with flowers. In false and flattering colors, he arrays the world with its pleasures before the youth. But the pleasures of earth will soon come to an end, and that which is sown must also be reaped."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 367.

#### *The Challenge of the Social Life*

Then there is the challenge of the social life. Every right-minded young person will not hesitate to take his stand in this respect, and decide to have no part in worldly social functions at which he cannot invite Christ to be present. If you have become a slave to some overmastering influence that makes its inroads into the vitals of your spiritual life, will you not determine in the fear of God to break loose in the strength that Christ provides, and henceforth let Him have full control of all your thoughts and actions?

Dear young people, you cannot afford to enter worldly alliances. We cannot copy worldly fashions, and expect the approbation of God. Seventh-day Adventist young people should dress in a manner in keeping with the high standards and the propriety held sacred by our denomination. Let us dress as sons and daughters of the heavenly King.

We would not be true to our trust as shepherds of the lambs and the young sheep of the flock if we did not add a few words about the question of being unequally yoked together with unbelievers. All kinds of arguments are put forth by both young people and their seniors, at times, supporting a worldly alliance. But let us remind you of Samson's experience. Instead of winning for God the daughter of the Philistines whom he desired, he was drawn into the pit of wreck and ruin. The voice of the

Lord is clear in this as in all other matters pertaining to the safeguarding and welfare of His children. Listen to this counsel from the One who speaks with authority:

"Hundreds have sacrificed Christ and heaven in consequence of marrying unconverted persons. Can it be that the love and fellowship of Christ are of so little value to them that they prefer the companionship of poor mortals? Is heaven so little esteemed that they are willing to risk its enjoyments for one who has no love for the precious Saviour?"—*Testimonies*, Vol. IV, p. 507.

Stirring times lie ahead, days of struggle and of victory, days of persecution and trouble, days of hope and faith, days when God is to use young men and women mightily in heralding the gospel of salvation to the ends of the earth. The numerous examples of integrity, faithfulness, courage, and loyalty to principle so beautifully brought to view in the Scriptures on the part of young people, encourage us to believe that the youth of this generation will respond nobly to the challenge and appeal set forth by the unchangeable standards and eternal principles given us by a kind and loving Father. The challenge is one to loyal service and valiant endurance.

#### *God's Purpose for the Youth*

We know that "God's purpose for the children growing up beside our hearths is wider, deeper, higher, than our restricted vision has comprehended. . . . And many a lad of today . . . will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in halls of justice, or in royal courts, as a witness for the King of kings."—*Education*, p. 262.

We have entered upon days of conflict such as the world has never seen. But these will also be days of unparalleled power. We may expect the mighty workings of the Spirit in a manner we hardly realize. "Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 612. In this work the youth will have their part. Some of the best, most fruitful days in the advent movement are still before us. But this is the time, too, when we must decide in which army we will march. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15.

#### *Look to Jesus*

If you feel discouraged and suffer under the defeat of the past, or find yourself bound in the slavery of sin, look to Jesus. He can set you free, He came "to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1.

May the young people in all our churches throughout the world surrender all to Him in a time like this. What greater decision could our youth make, and what greater gift could they bring to the Lord as a thank offering during this Week of Prayer, than to place their

youthful strength, their will power, their affections, and their lives upon the altar of sacrifice and service? But the challenge of the hour to the youth is not only for personal surrender and consecration, it is also a clarion call to be about our Father's business, inviting those around us to come to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And as the old year is closing and a new one drawing nigh, may all who love the Lord resolve in the fear of God to be truly faithful in Bible study, in secret prayer, in attending church services, in rendering to God what belongs to Him, in seeking only such recreations as will be pleasing to Christ, in reading only such literature as will fit for better service, in seeking only such companionship as will be for the interest of the kingdom of God, in being an example in attire as a true Seventh-day Adventist, in gaining a clearer conception of our place and responsibility in God's work, and in endeavoring to lead some one to Christ, thus doing as Jesus would do in our place.

Facing the perils of the last days and the judgment that will culminate in the establishment of universal righteousness, let us make sure that we find Him who has found us; and having found Him,

(Reading for Wednesday, December 11)

## *An Appeal for Faithful Stewardship*

BY L. H. CHRISTIAN

THE two guiding thoughts of human existence are personality and stewardship—the personality of God and man, and the responsibility of man toward God and his fellow men. In the world these sacred concepts are increasingly unpopular, but the advent people must never forget them. The words “duty” and “obedience,” so distasteful to many, are dear to all who love God. But millions today have shut God out of their lives. They deny His right to rule, especially in their own individual affairs.

Bible stewardship includes far more than finance. It is indeed concerned with motives rather than money. This stewardship is, first, a recognition of the absolute ownership of God and the equal rights of our fellow men; and, secondly, a faithful use of that which has been entrusted to us. It is a willing and complete consecration of all we are and all we have to Christ. It is a full surrender to the Lord to spend or be spent as He directs. If we farm, we are to farm for God. If we work, or trade, or whatever we do, it is all for Christ. We are His, and we live for Him, not for ourselves. True stewardship overcomes every form of covetousness. It places the welfare of God's cause above all selfish interests or personal ambitions. It is a consecration born of love alone—a love manifested in good deeds.

### *Holding to the Fundamentals*

Certain fundamentals, which many forget, must always be clear in our

cling to Him in our daily walk and living. He is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before His Father's throne.

Considering further that upon us rests the responsibility of carrying the last offer of salvation to the children of men, may we as young people and as parents be drawn closer together, and seek for that purity, peace, and power so essential in our lives. May each life be a living demonstration of appreciation of heaven's unspeakable gift—Jesus; that henceforth He shall be all and in all, and that He may help those of us who know and love Him so to live that those who know us but do not know Him, will want to know Him because they know us.

Remember that we have an unchanging God, an unchanging Saviour, and an unchanging gospel in these changing times. As ambassadors of God let us be champions of the principles of true simplicity, modesty, and dignity; let us lift the cross and follow where the Master leads.

Such is the challenge of the hour to our youth. Let us meet it in the spirit of the Master, and we shall be more than conquerors in Him who lived, who loved, who died, yet rose again, having thus earned the price of our salvation.

minds if we are really to live and do as God leads. First of all is the great fact of faith, that the Bible is both measuring line and guide. We must regard the Sacred Scriptures as the voice of the Lord. What God predicts will come to pass; what God promises is certain; what God commands must be obeyed. The Sabbath, the tithe, the advent hope, the Spirit of prophecy, which many ridicule, are accepted by us because they are in the Bible. Then, again, we must decide our duty and order our lives in the light of this present unusual time. That is vitally important. New spiritual dangers and material factors have brought changes into both the world and the work of God. Life is cheaper, and money is cheaper. There is much wasteful spending. Debts are increasing, and millions of people are out of work. In some lands things are better, in others brutal sins are glorified, while things which formerly were thought of as right are now regarded as criminal among the godless. Individual initiative and freedom of worship are hampered by law.

### *New Religious Battle Lines Emerge*

But these are outward things. The changes go far deeper. They are mental, and, above all, religious. These changes have come with lightning rapidity, but in unthought-of ways. New ideas of liberty and changed conceptions of duty are coming to the front. Though they affect both state and church, both the home and the individual, many of

them are yet mysterious, and the end is not in sight. For Europe, at least, where I am writing this, it is not an exaggeration to say that the mind of mankind, the state of society, and the general and international condition of affairs have changed more in the last two years than in the preceding twelve. These latest religions, or moral convictions and objectives, these strange standards of right and wrong, raise new problems and constitute a new appeal to be loyal to Christ, and to sacrifice for the cause of God. Of these new factors we shall name two:

1. The advent hope and message is stirring the hearts of men as never before. One writer says that a new message “of the end of the world and a coming kingdom of God is pressing to the front.” The renowned and learned Bishop Nicolai, of Yugoslavia, writes:

“What, then, is to be expected as a consequence of the present state of things in Europe? The number of those who believe in a speedy end of the world is growing from day to day in every country. There are writers, sects, groups of men and women, all eager believers in the end of the world. Is this belief altogether foolish, or is there some bitter truth in it? It seems indeed that the end of the world is near at hand.”—*“Spiritual Rebirth of Europe,”* p. 36.

2. The second great factor in modern thought is that religion, or antireligion, has again become a dominating and creating force. Mankind has become more religious, but not more Christian. In his book, “Religion and the European Mind,” Doctor Keller, of Geneva, writes:

“Revolution and religion today are far more closely related than they were during the French Revolution, when Christianity was replaced by the ‘Cult of Reason,’ and when Napoleon had no use for the ‘hypothesis of an Almighty God.’ The revolutions of the twentieth century have emerged, consciously or unconsciously, from a religious background; they can hardly escape being considered religious problems. They could not have captured the imagination of the masses and demanded their tremendous sacrifices if there were not in them an underlying mysticism of a religious character. They have developed creeds for which millions are willing to suffer and to die. They have their messiahs, apostles, and martyrs, who inspire the masses with a feeling of adoration and with the hope of salvation and victory. They have adopted symbols which have exercised a profound influence upon the collective imagination, and they are teaching an eschatology which anticipates a day of judgment and a kingdom to come.”—*Pages 9, 10.*

These tense feelings and dissatisfied longings are both opening and closing many doors to the advent message. On the whole, hitherto, these developments of thought and inquiry have been a large gain to our work.

However, religion today is less a conflict between creeds and churches than a

struggle unto death between Christianity and Humanism—between faith in a personal God and a denial of everything supernatural. We have come into an entirely new combination of battling forces. There is a measuring of spiritual zeal and sacrifice, rather than of dogma or doctrine. Religion, as understood by these people, is not theory, but life and power. The faith and devotion of these movements is marvelous.

The men who create new gods and define new views of eternity and the universe, of life and death, of right and wrong, are willing to give their all—property, name, home, and even their lives and loved ones—for their ideas. In one place their motto is: "We were born to die for this cause." Against these forces, many churches—lukewarm, indifferent, weak in faith, torn by controversy and personal pride—stand helpless, and are absolutely swept off their feet and left drifting.

But the advent people, loyal to their Master, must not fail. At this time, and under these conditions, God calls for His remnant church to awake. We must see again the consecration known fifty years ago. We need a revival of the advent message. We need even more the burning zeal and self-denial of the pioneers of this movement. A consuming love for Christ must burn all selfishness out of our hearts. A zeal for truth, a passionate yearning for the lost, must be in our very lives an impelling power to Christian service. While intensity is coming upon the world, it must not be said of us that we are "neither cold nor hot."

#### *The Hour Demands Wholehearted Consecration*

But if we are to enter this experience of wholehearted consecration, we must recognize anew the beautiful truths concerning God's all-embracing ownership. Mankind today refuses to honor the claims of God. Even many churches deny it. Yet it is still true that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." Ps. 24:1, 2. By both creation and redemption we belong to God. We are bought with a price, the blood of Jesus, and are not our own. Millions give themselves with boundless enthusiasm and loyal self-denial to some party or ideal. We must give ourselves to the Lord in an even greater faith and zeal. Our time belongs to God. We must gladly spend it in helping the poor, in doing good to others, and in glorifying God. We must talk courage and cheer.

It is wrong to waste days and hours in idle visits, foolish conversation, silly radio programs, expensive holiday trips, etc. Our bodies belong to Him whose body was hung on the cross. Selfish gratification of appetite is sin. 1 Cor. 3:16, 17. Our "children are a heritage of the Lord." Ps. 127:3. It cannot be right for parents to plan selfish, worldly careers for their children, when they should train them for humble, useful service for God and man. Not only our

property, but our money, our daily income, belongs to God. This applies to the poor as well as to the rich.

That the tithe is the Lord's must be evident to all true Bible students. Abraham paid "tithes of all." Gen. 14:20. Jacob promised a tithe even of his daily bread. The very fact that the tithing system belongs to the Melchizedek priesthood, of which Christ is the High Priest, proves that a tithe of our income is not our own. Heb. 7:1-8. The prophecy of Malachi makes this very plain. The third chapter begins with the statement that the Lord is coming to His temple suddenly. That was fulfilled in 1844, when the investigative judgment began in heaven, and Christ began His priesthood in the most holy place of the sanctuary above.

"Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from Mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?"

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. 3:7-12.

Every word of that chapter applies to the advent church at this time. The Saviour, too, endorsed tithing in definite terms when He stated that mercy, judgment, and love should be followed, and that tithing, even of little things, should not be omitted. Matt. 23:23.

What we have said about tithing applies to offerings as well. Some people have the idea concerning offerings that they can give or not give as they choose. It is true that the Lord loves a cheerful giver, and that neither tithes nor offerings are acceptable to God unless they are given in faith. But this does not change the fact that the offerings are a part of what we owe to the Lord. The prophet calls the neglect, not only of tithes, but of offerings, a dishonest act toward God. We cannot live in open unfaithfulness, and still hope to be saved.

#### *Faithful Stewardship Includes Honest Distribution*

But Bible stewardship comprises more than faithfulness in giving. It also includes a saving, as well as the equal and faithful distribution of that which has been given. It is not only vital that our ministers, missionaries, and members are

true in bringing to God His own; it is just as vital that every committee and every treasurer administer these funds efficiently and economically. Precious light has come to us on that subject through the Spirit of prophecy. The Bible principle, which had been forgotten for ages, is now being applied in this denomination. We are glad that we can look our brethren in the eye and tell them that they may, with confidence and joy, do their share, because the funds are carefully and honestly handled. In true gospel finance there is no underhanded work. Sharp, dishonest, and oppressive business methods, so common in the world, are hateful to God. The large, rich churches, conferences, and divisions are to share with the poorer. There is to be no undue centralization and no inequality.

When Paul, in Athens, saw the superstitious idolatry of the Greeks, his spirit was stirred within him. But love, not the enthusiasm fired by the apostasy all about him, was the chief motive of his large life service. Thus it must be with us. It is the love back of the giving which determines its value. Christian living is most closely related to Christian giving. God's first purpose in requiring us to give tithes and offerings, is indeed to give us the victory over selfishness and an experience of faith. Thus we read:

"I saw that Satan bade his angels lay their snares especially for those who were looking for Christ's second appearing, and keeping all the commandments of God. Satan told his angels that the churches were asleep. He would increase his power and lying wonders, and he could hold them. 'But,' he said, 'the sect of Sabbathkeepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects, to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ's kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in the most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it.

"We must keep in our ranks all the means of which we can gain control. The more means the followers of Christ devote to His service, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects. . . . Make covetousness and earthly treasure the ruling traits of their character. As long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back.'"—*Early Writings*, pp. 266, 267.

The Lord appeals to us to be faithful. Says the Spirit of prophecy:

"Let the neglected tithes be now brought in. Let the new year open upon you as men honest in their deal with God. Let those that have withheld their tithes send them in before the year . . . shall close, that they may be right with God, and never, never again run any risk of being cursed of God.

"Presidents of our conferences, do your duty; speak not your words, but a plain 'Thus saith the Lord.' Elders of the churches, do your duty. Labor from home to home, that the flock of God shall not be remiss in this great matter, which involves such a blessing or such a curse. Let all who fear God come up to the help of the Lord, and show themselves faithful stewards. The truth must go to all parts of the world."—*"Testimonies to Ministers,"* p. 306.

As a church, Seventh-day Adventists have done much to support the gospel, especially foreign missions. We often hear other denominations praise us for what we have done. We appreciate, too, the largehearted liberality on the part of some members. Their self-denial and love are the pillars of this cause. Yet what could we not have done if *all* had thus supported the cause of God, and if those who took *some* part had really been faithful? If an honest tithe and liberal offerings were brought in by this people, the great sin of robbing God would be blotted out and the message

would rise in great power. We could then send hundreds of missionaries to all the earth.

As we have traveled about in Africa, and in the dark, dark lands of Catholic or godless Europe, our very souls have been stirred. How can we leave these millions to perish in their ignorance and sin? A strange and wicked blindness has been upon us, though the Lord permitted the dreadful experience of inflation to teach us. Have we not seen how worthless money can become, and how uncertain its value is even now?

How can we keep in selfishness and covetousness the means so urgently needed in missionary work? Is it not high time for a real change? Think what a sweet joy and what an exalted privilege it is to help in saving the lost! Today God calls upon all His children to "make a covenant" with Him "by sacrifice." Ps. 50:5. In our beloved homeland we have so many good things for which to be thankful, and shall we not manifest our gratitude by deeds of love?

(Reading for Thursday, December 12).

## News From the Front

BY J. L. SHAW

AMID the alarmingly troublous conditions on earth today the program for Christ's people is unmistakably clear and plain. The great commission of the Saviour to His disciples is still the divine charter. The everlasting gospel, with added power, is to be carried to the uttermost parts of the earth. In this program every child of God is to act a definite part. The all-embracing scope of the movement to save men is thus set forth:

"The Saviour's commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time."—*"The Desire of Ages,"* p. 822.

It is a grave mistake to suppose that the work of soul winning depends alone upon ministers and missionaries. All who have received the life of Christ, in the very nature of the Saviour's plan, are enlisted to carry it to their fellow men. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another." 1 Peter 4:10. The union of the divine and the human was manifested in Christ. That divine nature of Christ is the soul-winning nature. It was that divine nature which inclined Him to leave heaven to save man. It is that same nature that possesses man as Christ enters into his life. The Christ within is the Christ of soul-winning service.

It is also a mistake to narrow down one's field of missionary service to his own church or conference. The world is our parish. The success of the work at home depends on the extension of the work abroad. Christ said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. Hard

times and the needs at home are no valid reasons for withdrawing missionaries from the front in our mission fields. When Christ has said, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," should mission leaders beckon their comrades homeward? Should they be told to pull down the flag and return home? No, a thousand times no! Onward, ever onward, is our battle cry. The brethren and sisters of the advent hope, by their faithfulness and liberality, have supported this growing world work so far in these trying and perilous times, and they will continue to do so until the work is finished.

Christ and His apostles set forth the life of the Christian as one of warfare, sacrifice, and service. Paul admonishes Timothy to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He urges the Ephesian brethren to put on the whole armor of God, that they might be able to fight, not a carnal warfare against flesh and blood, but a real warfare none the less—a warfare "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

### God's Providences Beckon to Greater Expansion

The onward march of God's last gospel message brooks no defeat. North, south, east, and west the message is going in every direction. It pushes onward. The annual statistics tell us the work is now conducted in 295 countries and islands, by 22,254 evangelistic and institutional laborers. This is an increase of 1,533 the past year. These workers are using in their ministry the amazing

number of 504 languages and dialects. Who can say our message of present truth is not going with a loud cry unto the uttermost parts of the earth?

In China last year the number of baptisms exceeded that of any previous year. The workers are pushing out into the border provinces. As the Chinese government is in a remarkable way opening up new roads into distant parts, our thin line of workers follows hard after. Dr. H. W. Miller writes:

"While we are showing a betterment in growth year by year, we could set the large number of talented young people coming through our schools to work out in these areas. This is our great problem just now."

For Mongolia he pleads for a doctor. He says our work in Mongolia is taking hold. We seem to be the only mission that has gained any footing at all among the people. Other missions have worked forty years with practically no results.

God is doing a miraculous work in the Inter-American Division. He who said, "Let there be light," is sending forth His light in the darkest and most priest-ridden sections. There is coming a great desire for the liberty of the gospel. Thousands are accepting the message. In the three years ended in 1933, 11,000 were received into church membership. The achievements of the book of Acts are being reenacted in these lands. Souls are accepting and holding to the truth at the peril of their lives. Elder E. E. Andross writes:

"I received a letter relating the experiences of a new company of believers living in a remote district. Having accepted the truths of the Bible, the wrath of the priest was aroused, and by mob violence they were driven from their homes. Two of the company were killed, and all their earthly possessions were lost. Although every possible effort was made to induce them to give up their new-found faith, the letter declares that all remained faithful.

"In another section where a church was organized, the cocoa plant is grown from which cocaine is extracted. The leaves are used for chewing, with very harmful effects, much worse than tobacco. When the new converts were told they would have to stop the profitable cultivation of this harmful plant, they all agreed. One brother said, 'Tomorrow before I am baptized I am going to lay the ax to the root of this evil.' And he did it. The others followed him."

### How Anam Became Ablaze With Interest

Elder Frederick Griggs, of the far-flung Far Eastern Division, writes:

"A young Mohammedan by the name of Lot came over from India to Malay to work in the mines. This man studied the Bible in comparison with the Koran. He found a philosophy of love, sacrifice, and gentleness in the Bible which he did not find in the Koran. He began to teach this philosophy. In due time he accepted Jesus as his own Saviour. His preaching drew people to him. He or-

ganized his followers into a church. He raised up other churches until he had five or six in a general organization. He had several preachers. One day, as he was walking along the road, he saw a little building with the words 'Seventh-day Adventist Chapel' over the door. He went in to see what was taught there. He became deeply interested in what the pastor had to say to him, and began to teach what he had learned. He studied and he taught. In a little while he was baptized, and he went on with his teaching. Now, something like a hundred people have been baptized, and there are from six hundred to a thousand deeply interested in the doctrines we hold so dear.

"A year and a half ago I took a trip from Saigon up through Anam and on to the north of French Indo-China. There was not a Seventh-day Adventist in all that territory. My heart cried out to God that His truth might enter that field. In our division office, after my return, we held special prayer seasons, asking God to manifest Himself in that great heathen kingdom. God answered our prayers. I again journeyed through Anam, and a church of twelve members had been raised up in Tourane.

"It came about in this way: An earnest Christian man had a friend who went to Paris and sent back to him some of our literature. He believed what it taught, and began to preach it. Formerly this man, a minister of the gospel, had been president of an organization of Christian Anamese believers of some six or seven thousand. So when he began to preach this new-found doctrine, his friends and followers listened to him. He did not know that there was any one in that part of the world who believed as he did.

"He wrote to a friend who lived down in Saigon about his new belief. This friend wrote back and told him that there was a missionary in Saigon who was preaching the same doctrine that he had found. He gave the man the name of this missionary, Pastor R. H. Wentland. After corresponding with this new believer, in due time Brother Wentland went up to Tourane to learn more about the interest which had come through the literature sent from France. He found two hundred people who wanted to be baptized. That interest has grown until today there are probably a thousand people who are interested in our faith, the majority of whom desire to unite with us in this movement.

"This, you should note, has taken place within the last few months. Thus God is moving in these lands. His providence is going out before us. There is now the greatest need of help for Anam. We must send two missionaries into this great field at once. The Anamese are the most progressive people of French Indo-China. Once we have a strong work established among them, the message will spread rapidly throughout all the land."

#### *Could Not Hold Back the Young People*

How the message is leaping forward in the South African Division can be

judged by the following figures: Six years ago there were in that field 10,129 church members; at the close of 1933 there were 21,140, with 18,069 more in Bible classes preparing for baptism. Elder Wright says:

"I want to tell you that when the action was taken at the Fall Council four years ago for an advanced move in evangelism, we found no one in the African Division that was so ready to respond to the call as our native ministry. They had already been working with zeal and devotion, but when they heard this new call to advance, they were not only willing to go, but they spread the spirit among the lay members. Many of our laity and young people were organized into Missionary Volunteer Societies. This has resulted in literally thousands coming into our Bible classes, and many have been baptized. It will cheer you to know that 15,000 have been baptized in the Southern African Division during the last five years.

"I am quite conscious of the fact that when we mention figures like this, certain questions must naturally arise in your minds. You inquire, 'Are you not having a mass movement? And are you carefully instructing these people? Are they carefully examined? Do they know what they are doing? Are they standing the test of persecution and trial? After they have been in the church a year or so, do they continue to grow into stalwart members?' Well, I am happy to tell you these people compose just as loyal a constituency, and they remain just as faithful and firm to this truth, as do our white members.

#### *Threatened With Imprisonment*

"This year a man came over with a company of Sabbathkeepers to attend a meeting in Ruanda. Before he left, the chief had said, 'If you go to that meeting with these people, you will have to go to prison for a period of five years.' The old man straightened up and said, 'I want to tell you I am going to that meeting; and when I return you can put me in prison if you desire, but you cannot take this religion out of my heart.' Truly, such an attitude shows that the message grips the hearts of these people the same as it grips our hearts who may understand it better.

"C. W. Bozarth, superintendent of the Congo Union Mission, writes: 'Really, we do not know what to do as some of these calls are becoming so urgent. Our workers, Missionary Volunteer workers and church members, are getting out of control in regard to preaching this message.' What a strange situation—church members getting out of control! That is, they cannot be held back. He says: 'You know we have been trying to hold our evangelistic work in check this year, but in spite of all we can do we shall have an addition of about 2,000 to our Bible classes, and there would be nearly 2,000 more if we should list all the new people who are really keeping the Sabbath. We have companies of people all through Ruanda-Urundi who are meeting every Sabbath for services. They

are keeping the Sabbath, and following this message the best they know how, but we do not think of counting them. I personally know of at least six companies like this. They have learned of the truth through some of our Missionary Volunteer workers' preaching; so when we could not give them a worker, they have appointed one of their own members to act as leader, and are carrying on in that way.'

"I said to a young man one day when he had told me his story, 'How is it you go out and bring the knowledge of the truth as best you can to your people who still sit in darkness? You are receiving no pay. Why do you do it?' Then he looked at me and laid his hand on his heart and said something I shall never forget. It was this: 'O Bwana [teacher], if you only knew what this message has done for my poor benighted soul, you would understand the reason why. That which it has done for my soul I am so anxious it shall do for the hearts of my people, so that they may be ready also to meet Jesus and go home to His kingdom.'"

#### *Some Interesting Figures of Increase*

Time and space fail us to tell of the growing work in other great divisions of the world field. Notice these increasing memberships in a few of them, taken from the latest reports received up to the time of writing:

Australasian, 16,113; Central European, 49,709; Northern European, 31,111; South American, 25,458; Southern Asia, 4,559; Southern European, 24,439; while in the China Division its membership has very nearly doubled during the last four years, now standing at 14,546. In all these fields, valiant soldiers of the cross are pressing onward. There is a strong note of courage in their messages as they send back urgent Macedonian appeals for help.

The calls come from many parts. The repeated question is, "What shall we do with all these calls?" They are crying needs for the bread of life. There are scores of young workers trained in our schools, ready to go anywhere to answer them. Now is the imperative hour to go forward. With the help of the Lord we can do much more than hold the forces in the field. To hold the forces at the front has been our great task during the past few trying years, while other mission boards have been calling missionaries home; but does that measure our full responsibility? Have we not camped around this mountain long enough? Should we not go forward with greater power and strength? Let us make the annual offering this year the largest in our history. God grant it may be so.



We are not to wait for souls to come to us. We must seek them out where they are. When the word has been preached in the pulpit, the work has just begun. There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel, unless it is carried to them.—"Christ's Object Lessons," p. 299.

(Reading for Friday, December 13)

## The Judgment

BY J. L. SHULER

THERE is a court summons issued for every man and woman, for every youth and child, in this meeting. This summons reads, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10.

Unbelieving men may ridicule the Bible now, they may scorn our Saviour's pardon and mock His redeeming love; but the day is coming when they must render an account at the judgment bar of God for the way they have trampled upon God's law and disobeyed His word. Yes, "we *must* all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." There is no exemption clause in the summons to God's court. "We must *all* appear," rich and poor, black and white, high and low. None can escape being judged. Between us and the future world lies this searching ordeal. And from this high tribunal will be handed down a decision that will settle our destiny, not for a few years only, but for all eternity.

From his creation God has left man free—free to obey His word, or free to disobey. But along with this freedom man's Maker has made it plain that there will be a day of final reckoning for each person, when he will be called to give account for the way he has used this power of choice for good or evil. Thus the wisest of men in the long, long ago wrote, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Eccl. 11:9. And finally this man of wisdom sums up by saying: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:13, 14.

Men may think they can live as they please, and never be called to account for their deeds. But God's immutable decree is, "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14:12. The very fact that you and I are alive, and have the power of choice between right and wrong, makes it inevitable that we shall be judged for the use we make of this power.

### God's Standard in the Judgment

Since the judgment is certain, no one escaping its decisive issue, the only wise thing to do is to prepare for it. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished." Prov. 22:3. It is essential that every one prepare for the judg-

ment, and in order to prepare for it, we must know the standard by which all will be judged.

Heaven has made this standard plain in three ways: It is given in a brief form in the ten commandments; it is amplified in the teachings of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; it is exemplified in the righteous life that Jesus Christ lived here in human flesh. Thus in the Scriptures we read that man will "be judged by the law" (Rom. 2:12; James 2:8-12), by the word of God (John 12:48), and by the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16).

Thus it will be seen that in order to be prepared for the judgment we must receive Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, and permit Him to live His righteous life in us every day, so that we may be obedient to every one of God's commandments and every principle of His word.

We must never forget that we shall be judged by God's standard. Some may set up their own standard, even when they know better, or at least ought to know better. We hear them say, "I am as good as Brother A or Sister B." Another declares, "I am as good as the average believer." But remember you will be weighed for eternal gain or loss, not by any human standard, but by God's immutable law.

### Our Individual Accountability

In that great day the decisive question will be, "What have *you* done? Have you manifested the spirit of Christ? How did you live day by day in all your dealings with your fellow men?" Each soul will be judged according to his own record. Your case will not be determined by what some church official or some minister or any one else may have said or done. No, the decision will rest upon what you yourself have done. Ought we not, then, always to go straight forward in doing our duty, and follow exactly what is right according to God's word, regardless of what others in our own families or in the church may do? Let us not be so foolish as to attempt to justify our mistakes or wrong words or actions, by pointing to others who are guilty of the same wrongs.

This thought of our individual responsibility to God should ever be kept in mind. We should count this a matter of supreme importance. Daniel Webster, when asked what was the greatest question that ever engaged his mind, said impressively, "My personal accountability to God."

The godly character of our most intimate associates, even though they be the best loved of our own household, will not save us in the judgment. Let not the man of the world whose wife may

be a devout follower of Christ, think that her faith will answer for his sins in the judgment. To the careless, godless young man or woman I would say, Your dear old mother may have spent her days in sorrow, her nights in prayer, and with bleeding heart and blasted hopes, gone down to the grave yearning for your salvation—even that, unless you have sought a personal preparation, will not save you in the judgment. Said Ezekiel: "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Eze. 14:20.

No matter how close the association may be in this life, the judgment will separate the false from those who are truly the Lord's. The whole mass of mankind will be divided into two classes, the one appointed to be taken to heaven at the Lord's coming, the other left upon the earth to be destroyed in the lake of fire.

Every one will be judged according to what he "hath *done*." It will be of no advantage in the judgment to say, "I intended to do right." Your case and mine will be decided according to what we have actually done, and not by our intentions, promises, pledges, or resolutions. Every unforgiven sin will be laid bare, every secret thought made known, and every dark deed be brought to light.

Here is God's message today to every soul in the world, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." Seventh-day Adventists know that the hour of God's judgment began in the court of heaven in 1844, and that ever since October 22 of that year, the cases of the professed people of God, beginning with righteous Abel, have been taken up one by one, and each case decided, each reward determined, by what is found written in each life record.

### God's Judgment Hour Nearing Its Close

There are no people in the world who ought to be so stirred to preparation for the judgment as Seventh-day Adventists. While others may expect the judgment in some far-distant day, Adventists know that the judgment is now going on in the heavenly court, that "the hour of His judgment is come." The judgment has set and the books have been opened.

While you are sitting here, the case of some soul may be decided in heaven for eternal life or everlasting destruction. It is court week in heaven, and your name is listed. The supreme court of the universe is daily handing down decisions that fix the destiny of souls for eternity. Soon your case and mine will be forever settled. Oh, what a solemn hour is this! "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." How carefully! how respectfully we ought to live each moment. In the Spirit of prophecy we read:

"In the typical service, when the work of atonement was performed by the high

priest in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary, the people were required to afflict their souls before God, and confess their sins, that they might be atoned for and blotted out. Will any less be required of us in this antitypical day of atonement, when Christ in the sanctuary above is pleading in behalf of His people, and the final, irrevocable decision is to be pronounced upon every case?

"What is our condition in this fearful and solemn time? Alas, what pride is prevailing in the church, what hypocrisy, what deception, what love of dress, frivolity, and amusement, what desire for the supremacy! All these sins have clouded the mind, so that eternal things have not been discerned.

"Shall we not search the Scriptures, that we may know where we are in this world's history? Shall we not become intelligent in regard to the work that is being accomplished for us at this time, and the position that we as sinners should occupy while this work of atonement is going forward? If we have any regard for our souls' salvation, we must make a decided change. We must seek the Lord with true penitence; we must with deep contrition of soul confess our sins, that they may be blotted out.

"We must no longer remain upon the enchanted ground. We are fast approaching the close of our probation. Let every soul inquire, How do I stand before God? We know not how soon our names may be taken into the lips of Christ, and our cases be finally decided. What, oh, what will these decisions be? Shall we be counted with the righteous, or shall we be numbered with the wicked?"—*Review and Herald, March 22, 1887.*

The very fact that we have been living in the hour of God's judgment since 1844, that this most solemn work has been going on in heaven for ninety-one years, proves that we must be very near the close of human probation. Soon the last case of those now living will be decided. Then Jesus will solemnly declare: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:11, 12.

When this decree goes forth, it will be too late to make any change in your life—too late to prepare to meet your God. As that decree finds you,—careless or earnest, consecrated or worldly, blameless or sinful, obedient or disobedient,—so you will remain. Whatever you expect to do in preparing for the judgment you must do before that decree goes forth. Should not this cause us to live in such relation to God each hour that we may be prepared at any time for our case to be decided? Nothing less than an unbroken abiding in Christ, and He in us, and an entire consecration moment by moment, will suffice in this serious time to make us always ready for the issuing of that irrevocable decree.

Your life and mine must soon come in review before God. Oh, what a fearful hour that will be! It will mark the supreme crisis of the ages. Permit me, fellow pilgrim, to press the question, Are you living each day in preparation for that decisive hour just before you?

#### *Have You Made Jesus Your Advocate?*

Sin is the only thing that will condemn any person in the judgment; hence God calls upon men everywhere to repent, and to get rid of sin, that they may be ready for the final test. Acts 17:30, 31. If you and I would be prepared for the judgment, we must be cleansed from every sin.

There is only one way by which to rid oneself of sin, and that is by repentance, confession, and personal faith in Christ as the sin bearer. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Verse 9.

The Son of God Himself has declared in John 5:24, that the soul who accepts Him "shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Paul declares in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Since our lives must soon come in review before God, should we not above all else make sure that Jesus is our personal Saviour, that Christ is living in us each day, and that every thought, word, and act is under His control? As we face the final test for eternal weal or woe, shall we not, during the closing hours of this Week of Prayer, examine our lives to see if we are obedient to every command of God, and living in harmony with His will? If we are failing to observe one of God's precepts, shall we not repent of this even at this very hour, and turn to God with all our hearts, to do exactly what He has commanded in His word?

We are counseled at this time to come to Jesus and buy of Him gold, and to obtain of Him white raiment, that we may be clothed. And in plain language we are told what this means to us:

"The gold is faith and love, the white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, the eyesalve is that spiritual discernment which will enable you to see the wiles of Satan and shun them, to detect sin and abhor it, to see truth and obey it."—*"Testimonies," Vol. V, p. 233.*

Our only ground of hope in the judgment is that we shall be hidden in Christ, clothed with His righteousness. And Christ's righteousness is imputed and imparted to us freely and solely by living faith in Him as our only Saviour. But let us ever remember the following instruction:

"No man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for

man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul."—*Review and Herald, Nov. 4, 1890.*

The greatest question before us now is, Are we ready for the judgment? If we pass that examination acceptably, we win everything. If we fail, everything is lost.

It is a fearful time for that man who is on trial for his life by an earthly court. How tense the moments of waiting, when, after the presentation of all the evidence, the jury has retired to make its decision of "guilty" or "not guilty"! A life is hanging in the balance. What will the verdict be? In the work of human judgment, cases are often appealed to higher courts, and sometimes the decision is reversed. Sometimes appeal after appeal is made till the heinousness of the crime is forgotten, and sympathy for the criminal prevails. But you and I are to be tried before the supreme court of the universe, from whose decisions there can be no appeal. When the sentence is pronounced, it will stand for eternity. The decision rendered in each case shall be perfectly just, hence is irrevocable.

Oh, how solemn, how awful, is this truth! As we contemplate that most solemn day when our lives must pass in review before God and the decision be handed down, fixing our eternal destiny for life or death, it should bring to our minds the most serious thoughts and solemn reflections! Realizing that the decision will be unalterable, that there will be no second chance, how this thought should lead us to examine ourselves, and to seek the Lord for mercy! It should lead us to humble ourselves, and daily place our cases in the hands of our great High Priest, who in heaven is now ministering in our behalf. "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:25.

His wondrous intercession avails only for those who wholly commit their cases to Him. He will take our cases on only one condition,—the surrender of the life. We must serve Him down here, if we would have Him plead for us up there.

O my judgment-bound friend, let me ask, Is Jesus your advocate? Have you placed your case fully in His hands? Your eternal destiny depends on whether or not you have done this. There is no other hope.

"The judgment has set, the books have been opened;

How shall we stand in that great day  
When every thought, and word, and action,

God, the righteous Judge, shall weigh?

"O, how shall we stand that moment of searching,

When all our sins those books reveal?  
When from that court, each case decided,

Shall be granted no appeal."

(Reading for Sabbath, December 14)

## Are You Ready?

BY I. H. EVANS

THE most important questions that we can ask ourselves today are, "Am I ready for My Lord to come? Do I have oil in my lamp? Am I among the class pictured by Jesus under the type of the wise virgins?"

No one can answer these questions but ourselves. We know whether or not we are in that condition. If we are not ready for our Lord to come, there is no business, no work, no undertaking, so important as that of getting ready to meet Him.

There are few joys of earth that compare with the pleasure of meeting some well-beloved earthly friend. With what expectancy we wait for the time. Our hearts are all aglow; everything else seems secondary; the one great event is the coming of the one we love. The whole household is made ready to receive our beloved. We put on our best garments on the expected day, and with the utmost joy await the hour.

The apostle John seemed to have this thought in mind when he wrote: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:2, 3.

Somehow John seems to have caught the very essence of the pleasure that the Christian will experience when he shall see the Master coming in the clouds of heaven. To the beloved disciple the coming of Christ was real, desirable, and longed for. In the Revelation John wrote: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. 1:7.

When John was closing his writing of the Revelation, Christ was speaking. He said, "Surely I come quickly;" and John cried out, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This is the prayer of every devout believer who is sick of sin and its effects, and longs for the presence of his Lord.

### Jesus Promises to Return

While here on earth during the last days of His ministry, Christ said much concerning His going away and His coming again. In all He said there is not a suggestion that His coming is conditional, or may not take place. Every statement is so positive and so assuring that we may hold to it as absolutely certain that Christ will surely come again.

"The Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Matt. 24:30. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

When Christ was taken up from the earth, and while His disciples were still looking after their ascending Lord, two men stood by them in white apparel and said,

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

The writers of the New Testament all believed in the second coming of Christ. The apostle Peter wrote of it:

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:7. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise. . . . Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?" 2 Peter 3:10-12.

The apostle Paul likewise often mentioned the second coming of Christ. To the church that he raised up in Thessalonica he wrote: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

Many such scriptures directly teach or indirectly point to the second coming of Christ. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

The candid reader and hearer must confess that the word of God cannot be understood without believing in the second coming of Christ. It is a settled fact, plainly taught in the Bible, that Jesus Christ will come again to this earth. You believe in His second coming, and that He is coming soon. So do I. The church centers all its faith in this advent doctrine. If Christ is not to come again, there can be no resurrection from the dead. Awful thought! that all who have died are without hope, as also are we, who live under sentence of death. But He will come! He has not left us to grope in the dark on this point. What a glorious promise He has left to

us, "I will come again to receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

### God's Gift of Immortality

At the second coming of Christ the dead in Christ shall rise from their graves and shall put on immortality. "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

Here is an hour the like of which never has been and never can be again,—the hour when the righteous dead shall awake and come forth from their graves, and the redeemed shall be clothed with immortality, and be caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Death has been a hard, cruel master. Its power has broken many a household represented here today. But in the resurrection morn all the sleeping saints of God will be brought forth, not bound with grave-clothes, but clothed with life and immortality. Health will beam from every eye, hope will speak from every heart, rapture will thrill in every voice. Families long separated will then be reunited. Adam and Eve will come forth to immortality, Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Rachel,—O the innumerable multitude that will meet on that white cloud to sing the praises of Him who has redeemed them! Mothers will clasp their long-lost children, and sing the praises of Him who brought life and immortality to their loved ones snatched from their arms by death.

### Christ's Coming Near

"Is the day of Christ's coming near?" is the question on many lips in these troubled days. "When will He come?" "How long before that glorious morning shall dawn?" While we know not the day nor the hour, we know His coming is near at hand. Many signs, which, when seen on earth, were to show that glad day to be near, have already been given. In Matthew 24 and Luke 21 we read these signs as set forth by Christ Himself. The church is now beyond the fulfillment of nearly every sign that Christ gave to show His coming near. The sun and the moon have been darkened, and the stars have fallen in a marvelous manner. The prediction that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," has met an amazing fulfillment even in this our own day. The political signs of wars and rumors of war have been fulfilling before our eyes for a generation. In the world there is certainly now such "distress of nations, with perplexity," as has never heretofore been seen upon the earth. Riches have been greatly increased, and the wealth of the world multiplied manifold during the last half century. Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after what may take place at any time.

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree," said Christ. "When his branch is yet



tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matt. 24:32-35.

#### *Watch and Be Ready*

In His last talk with His disciples about His second coming, Christ seemed greatly concerned that His people should not let that day come upon them unawares. Again and again He urged the necessity of watching and being ready. Before He spoke the words, "Watch therefore," "Be ye also ready," He gave a striking illustration about being ready. Said He:

"Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Matt. 24:36-41.

Then follows the earnest admonition: "*Watch therefore*: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore *be ye also ready*: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Verses 42-44.

Some may ask, "What will keep us from being prepared in that day?" Christ suggested the things that will keep us from being prepared, when He said:

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 24:45-51.

There will be unmistakable suffering in at last being lost. The picture represents those who may prove unfaithful; it represents us, if that should be our condition. We have seen people who have lost their homes, their health, their money, their positions. We know how

they have suffered. What wakeful nights, what days of mental anguish, they passed through! We have seen death scenes which are too painful for description; but nothing in human experience can be so unspeakably sad as to see the Master coming when we are unprepared to meet Him.

Christ illustrated this in the parable of the ten virgins. Five were wise and five were foolish. Some were ready for the bridegroom's coming, some of the waiting ones were found not ready.

Surely none can say that the Lord has not given ample and clear warnings to His people to prepare for His return. Candor must compel the admission that by admonition and exhortation, by illustrations setting forth the fate of the unready, and by signs whose fulfillment would show the day of deliverance to be near, our Lord has done all that He could do to induce us to get ready to meet Him with joy.

The great question for each one here today to consider is, Am I ready? We sing about it, we talk about it, we pray about it; but the all-important personal question to me—to you—is, Am I ready? Put it to yourself, each of you, this very hour, Am I ready for my Lord's return? For when He comes, if we are not ready, we shall certainly be among the lost.

Do you ask, What is it to be ready? Let me read you a scripture that tells the kind of people Christ will have in His church when He comes: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

#### *Christ Accepts the Remnant Church*

In his letter to believers at Ephesus the apostle Paul writes at length of the characteristics that will mark the members of the church that Christ will accept. In chapter 4, verses 1 and 2, we read: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."

What a picture of the members who will compose His church! We read on: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Verses 29-32.

Remember there will be no time for

preparation when the Bridegroom comes. This we see plainly from the parable of the ten virgins. If we are to be prepared for the second coming of Christ, the preparation must be made this side of the close of probation. When the door of mercy closes, it will be forever too late to confess sins. We cannot know when our cases are decided; but this we do know, that mercy now awaits the repentant child of God.

Thank God, our hope and strength are in Him, not in ourselves. God is able to deliver every sinner from the assaults of the enemy, to keep us from falling, and to present us to the Lord faultless. It is Christ who counts in this conflict, not ourselves. He has already gained for us *our* victory. It is His life and death that bring to us justification and sanctification. This is a gift, and it must be accepted and received by faith.

No one but Christ can give us eternal life. No one can hinder our receiving this life but ourselves. Whether we are ready or not ready depends upon us. Each of us must make the choice and settle the question whether we purpose to be among the redeemed, or among the class represented by the foolish virgins. Christ invites us to come to Him this very day, and be washed and cleansed from all our sins, and made free in Him.

The end will come suddenly, and to many—oh, so many!—unexpectedly. To the waiting, watching ones Christ will bring life and immortality. There will be some who will see the Son of man coming with the greatest possible joy. Some will see Him coming with the deepest fear and terror. In which company do you propose to be? If you say, "It is my sins that discourage me," then I urge you to bring your sins to the "fountain prepared for uncleanness," and be washed and made whole. I love the thought in the hymn:

"One thing I of the Lord desire,

For all my paths have miry been,  
Be it by water or by fire,

O make me clean, O make me clean.

So wash me Thou, without, within,

Or purge with fire, if that must be,  
No matter how, if only sin

Die out in me, die out in me."

This service closes the Week of Prayer. May it be to each of us the beginning of a new life of faith in Christ Jesus. On this occasion who will reconsecrate himself to the Lord? Who will resolve that, as for himself, he will be, with God's help, a true, earnest, prayerful Christian till Jesus comes? All who will make this consecration today, please stand, and thus manifest that you desire to make a fuller and deeper consecration to the Lord. Let me exhort you to confess every sin to the Lord. Make a full surrender to Him, and ask Him to keep you from falling into the snares of the devil.

Let us pray. [Here the leader should offer an earnest prayer or call upon the one previously invited to lead in prayer. Follow with a social meeting.]

## Here Let the Offering for Missions Be Taken

## LESSONS FOR THE CHILDREN

### GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO LEADERS

[In preparing the lessons to be used during the Week of Prayer for the children, Mrs. L. L. Caviness has used the topic selected for the general reading for each day, endeavoring to adapt it so it will be understood by the children. Mrs. Caviness makes the following suggestions to those chosen as leaders of the meetings held for the children:]

The children's lessons for the Week of Prayer are sent out in a spirit of deep humility, and with a consciousness of unworthiness for the task of writing them. We must acknowledge a very real and personal blessing in their preparation, and we pray that a rich measure of the Holy Spirit may rest upon every worker selected to help in the children's services.

We suggest that the texts of Scripture be read by different children during the study. The references should be passed out beforehand, so that everything may be in readiness.

The songs selected are only suggestive, and may be replaced by any others that may be desired.

The lessons will be of little spiritual help to the children unless presented with much prayer and intercession. We would suggest closing with prayer daily. Praying with the children individually before and after meetings will bring much blessing. Let us not forget the very important part, that of laboring personally for the children. The Holy Spirit is promised to every one who thus seeks to win souls for the kingdom. Jesus is coming soon. Our boys and girls must be ready to meet Him. May the Lord lay the burden of their souls upon our hearts.

(Lesson 1, Sabbath, December 7)

### Jesus Sends His Love to Us

WHEN your mother has a letter from some friend far away, she may read it to you all, perhaps at the dinner table. When she reaches the close of the letter, she may read to you the words, "My love to the children." And so in this letter God sends us in the Bible, He has said to us over and over in so many ways, "My love to you,—yes, I send My love to you,—and He does not forget to name especially the children! All over the world, to every kind of child, to you here in this meeting, to those in homes of wealth, to the neglected children in the poorest streets, and to those in their lowly huts, He sends His love. We find it easy to love those who are lovable, those who are kind and generous or helpful, and most of all those who love us. But Jesus loves those who need Him, even though they may not know they need Him. (Let a child read Romans 5:6,8.)

A little boy who had heard "Jesus stories" all his life, but had never been told of His sufferings, came home from morning service one Sabbath, and went straight to find his mother, who had remained at home to care for her tiny baby.

"Mother," he said, "did you know Jesus died for us?"

"Yes, dear, I know. Shall I tell you more about it this afternoon?"

"Do, mother, do! But, O mother, why did He do it? Was it because He loved us? It must have been because He loved us!"

Yes, boys and girls, you cannot think of any other reason for His doing that. It was because He loved us. It must have been. He tells us that Himself. (See Jer 31:3.)

We must realize not only the love of Jesus, but also that of the Father for us. The disciple John has spoken to us of that. A man does not adopt a child and call him his "son," unless he loves him. (See 1 John 3:1, first part.)

Then, too, Jesus loves every single person. In the parable of the lost sheep the shepherd goes out in search of *one* sheep—the least that can be numbered. So if there had been

but one lost soul, Christ would have died for that one. Is not that love? There is no self in that kind of love.

"The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love that He has to us; for it is through the drawing of His love that we are led to come to Him."—*"Mount of Blessing," p. 155.*

Some of you have been hearing about Jesus' life and work all your lives. Think through it just as we sit quietly here. Think of Him talking with the rich young man, urging him to dedicate all his possessions to the poor. It was love for the needy that prompted Jesus to say that. Yes, and love for the young man himself; because He knew the young man could be saved only in learning to love others, and in helping them.

Think of Jesus talking with the disciples when the mothers brought their children. The disciples were annoyed, and began sending the children away. But Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." It was love for the children that prompted Him to have them brought to Him.

Think of the day when He, with a company of people entering the gates of Nain, met a funeral procession coming out to bury a young man, the only son of a widowed mother. "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her." She moved on, blinded with her tears. But Jesus came close to her, and gently said, "Weep not." Then, when the bearers had been asked to stand still and the sounds of mourning had ceased. He said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." The young man opened his eyes. Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up! And the sorrowing mother had her living son again! That was love, was it not?

Think of the centurion's servant who was dear to him, and lay ill, and whose master said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." And Jesus, honoring his faith, said, "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." That was love.

Think of Jesus at the well of Jacob, talking with the woman of Samaria. As He explains to her about the water of life, she is drawn to Him, and is led to call her neighbors. And Jesus, forgetting that He is hungry and thirsty, points out to them the way of life. Was not that love?

Listen while He explains to them the way in which we are to live in Him. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." Herein is love.

Then see Him on the cross, thinking of the poor lost thief beside Him; thinking of His beloved disciple John and His lonely, sorrowing mother, and even of the jeering, mocking crowd that have crucified Him, and hear Him say, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do!" This is love.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." 1 John 4:10.

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Verse 16.

### Appeal

What will you do with this love? You cannot prevent His loving. It is poured out for you. You dare not refuse it. Will you accept it just as He gave it? Just as He gives it every day anew?

Now, this moment, while we pray, if you are willing to accept this love of Jesus as His gift to you, kneel right down where you are, and pray Him to come into your heart at this moment.

[As the children kneel one after another,

kneel with them and join in silent prayer. Then close the service with an earnest prayer for consecration to God, for forgiveness of sins, for courage to confess wrongs to father and mother, for grace to come to Jesus, whatever it costs.

Songs: "Just as I Am," No. 272, "Gospel in Song;" "Just When I Need Him Most," No. 130, "Gospel in Song;" "There Is a Fountain," No. 290, "Gospel in Song."]

(Lesson 11, Sunday, December 8)

### Christ Our Righteousness

YESTERDAY we were speaking of the love of God and how it shows itself. It is all about us. It gives us life, and maintains life; it gives us our powers of mind and body.

As we consider this love, our hearts respond to it, and we long to be like the Lord. God is love. Therefore Godlikeness, or righteousness, is love, and love is the light and the life of God. (Read 1 John 4:16.)

When God wished to reveal Himself to man, He did so through the person of His Son, Jesus. If we long to be like Jesus, we may receive as a gift the likeness to Him—not by a great sum paid out, or some dangerous deed accomplished. No, His life of righteousness is given to us as a free gift.

Paul speaks of His righteousness, His loveliness, His character, as a garment. He says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 13:14, first part. We have all felt the comfort of clean clothes. Weary, dirty, discouraged, we have felt the sense of refreshment that comes from a bath and clean garments. Just as simply as that Jesus bids us wash and be clean in His blood, and then be clothed in the freshness of the new life of His righteousness—His very self.

Jesus is called "our righteousness" in the Bible. Turn to Jeremiah 23:6 and read with me: "This is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness."

Once I cared for a little girl whose mother had died. She was brought to me from a long journey in a little dress that had once been white. Now it was grimy and dirty from the train soot and dust. That night, when I had bathed her little body and tucked her in bed, I quickly made another little dress, a white one. The next day when I was getting her ready to go for a walk, I slipped the new dress on her. She looked down at herself, touched her dress, held up the skirt to the light, peered at it, then looked at the pile of soiled clothing on the stool beside us, and asked:

"Whose dress is this?"

"It is yours."

"How did it come to be mine? That is my dress over there! How is this mine?"

"I gave it to you; now it is yours, for I have given it to you. You do not need to wear the soiled one."

She was quiet a moment, still looking at it. Then she looked into my face and said, "You were good to me to give me a new dress!"

So the putting on of the new garment of Christ is just as simple as that. We cannot make ourselves good, any more than that baby girl could make herself a new dress. If she had tried, she would have failed utterly. So with us. It is only through the life from God that spiritual life is begotten in our hearts.

In another place He has called us "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." Isa. 61:3.

We are inclined to be like the little girl. We feel we cannot own this new garment of

His righteousness, that only the old soiled garment of our own failures belongs to us. But this new garment is given freely, and is to be acquired in no other way. This is a precious thought. It is not earned nor bestowed because of any merit on our part. We are told that Satan is unwilling that this precious thought should be presented to God's people freely and clearly; "for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 161. Let us rejoice at these words, and clasp tightly the promise contained in them.

Now this righteousness of Christ is not a cloak put on over our own self-righteousness to cover up unconfessed and unforsaken sins; it is a principle of life that changes the character and controls the conduct. "Holiness is *wholeness* for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 555.

But what are the conditions of our receiving this great gift? There are three:

First, selfishness must be destroyed in us. "The miserable, filthy garment of self must be destroyed."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 186.

Second, we must be willing to put on Christ. Christ will reveal Himself to every one who is willing to be clothed with the robe of His righteousness.

Third, we must earnestly desire the gift. "If our hearts are united with Christ's heart, we shall have a most intense desire to be clothed with His righteousness."—*Id.*, p. 131.

It is our privilege as well as our duty to go about thus clothed. And our lives will become a sweet fragrance from Christ's spirit when we have accepted the garment of His presence.

God's people are about to enter upon their final conflict. This thought used to bring terror to me, but we need not be afraid. Though the darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance, none who trust in God need fear; for when the blast of the terrible ones is as a "storm against the wall," God will be to His church "a refuge from the storm."

God sends every child of His into the world as His representative. In every act of life we are to make manifest His nature. We are to represent the life and character of God. This is possible only through our acceptance of the grace and righteousness of Christ.

"The dear Lord's best interpreters  
Are humble human souls;  
The gospel of a life like His  
Is more than books or scrolls.

"From scheme and creed the light goes out;  
The saintly fact survives;  
The blessed Master none can doubt  
Revealed in holy lives."

[Suggestions: Close the second meeting with prayer for the gift of the righteousness of Christ. No. 80, "Christ in Song," is an appropriate hymn for closing. All may sing softly or it may be used as a special song.]

(Lesson III, Monday, December 9)

## The Business of Christians

JESUS said, "Ye are the salt [the preserver] of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor [its taste], wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out." Matt. 5:13.

Immediately afterward He said:

"Ye are the light of the world. . . . Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel [a bushel measure, evidently], but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Verses 14-16.

Again He said:

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. . . . He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. . . . Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples." John 15:1-8.

In each case Jesus is speaking to His followers, to those who have taken His name and belong to Him. He tells them what it means to be His followers. He says it means to be like salt, that which keeps things from spoiling, that which preserves.

He says it means to be a strong light set up in a high place to give light. Then He says it means to be a branch that brings forth much fruit. This, He says, is what it means for one to be His disciple. And when His disciples are like this, His Father is glorified.

If the salt becomes tasteless, it is thrown away because it is of no use. If the light is put under a large cover, it gives no light, and so is also useless. If the branch bears no fruit, it is evidently dead or useless wood; it is fit only to be burned, and so is cut off from the vine. Thus He plainly sets forth the business of Christians in this world.

"All who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ, must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world's need. Self-love, self-interest, must perish. . . . The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 623.

This then is our mission in life. We shall have other ambitions, to be a great physician, a great builder, a great teacher, or a great musician. But all these must be subordinate. To win souls to our Jesus—that is our main business. Some of you may be great preachers and may preach to thousands mightily, but every one who is true to his Lord and Master will be glad to pray and struggle with the Lord for the soul of even a single person.

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." We cannot get away from that.

In Proverbs we are told, "He that winneth souls is wise." The Spirit of the Lord caused James to write, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death."

The sweetest privilege given the human soul is to be allowed to say to another human soul, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Nothing else can make up for our failure in this. Our blessed Lord has planned it so that we may share with Him the joy of seeing souls born into the kingdom of God. He could bring men to Himself without us, but He allows us to point the way. We try to do things too much in our own way. We do not let the Holy Spirit possess us so He can use us. If we would, we might know such joy in winning souls that we would lose sight of self. Can you think of a greater joy than to see in the courts of glory those for whom you labored on earth?

It is not for nothing that in the story of choosing the first disciple we are told, "He [Andrew] first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah." And he brought him to Christ. Nor again, "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth."

We are told that in the years immediately following the death of Christ, the disciples had so learned from Jesus that they knew how to bring single individuals to Christ. Read the story of Philip and the eunuch, of

Peter and Cornelius, of Paul and Silas and their jailer. In all these stories, and many others, we find the men of God working in the simplest possible ways for the people they met in ordinary life.

This kind of work can be done by any one, even by the smallest child here, if he has received from his Lord a love for lost souls. You can get that love only by living close to Jesus, and by praying Him to give you this love that led Him to leave all heaven to win men to Himself.

Will you do that? Shall we right here and now call upon God to give us this hunger, so that it will burn within us, and make us never leave off searching for an opportunity to speak a winning word for Jesus? Let us pray for it.

[Songs: "The King's Business," No. 95, "Gospel in Song;" also Nos. 98 and 83.]

(Lesson IV, Tuesday, December 10)

## Challenge to Youth

WHEN the apostle John was old, he wrote letters to various churches for whom he had worked. In one of these he addressed different classes of people, and told why he thought specially of writing to them.

"I write unto you, young men [that is, young people], because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father."

A few verses farther on he says,

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." 1 John 2:13, 14.

I rather think these children and young people to whom John was writing were Sabbathkeeping young people, and their people were members of that early apostolic church that was so zealous in preaching the good news of Jesus to the world.

It is to just such a company we are speaking today. Most of you have attended Sabbath school and Sabbath services nearly all your lives. The phrases, "the Sabbath," "missionary work," "soon coming of Jesus," have grown so familiar to your ears that they scarcely arrest your attention. But Jesus is speaking to us again in that gentle, entreating voice that He used in speaking to the young man who came to Him asking the way to the kingdom so many hundreds of years ago.

"Yet lackest thou one thing," Jesus said to him; "sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me." Luke 18:22. Christ is still calling for volunteers to enlist under His banner, and to bear it before the world. The church needs its children and young people.

We can think of able leaders in this church who have fallen in death this very year. Who will go on with their work? Some one must go on. Jesus' life and death are truths too precious to fail of accomplishing their purpose because some of us fail to make them known. When we have the experience that teaches us that Jesus loves us and died to save us, we have no right to refuse to pass on that knowledge to others. It has been confided to our care. We cannot but be true to the trust.

We are accountable to God for the light He has given us. Our dangers have been plainly stated, we have been cautioned and guarded on every side. We have listened to the most heart-searching truths. We shall be held responsible for every appeal and warning.

But these thoughts need not depress us. Our Lord will cooperate with all who strive to serve Him faithfully as He cooperated with Daniel and his three companions.

Sometimes boys and girls think they will wait and give themselves to God's cause for service later on, when they are older. But they need not wait.

"I wish I could portray the beauty of the Christian life. Beginning in the morning of life, controlled by the laws of nature and of God, the Christian moves steadily onward and upward, daily drawing nearer his heavenly home, where await for him a crown of life and a new name, 'which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.' Constantly he grows in happiness, in holiness, in usefulness. . . .

"God has given the youth a ladder to climb, a ladder that reaches from earth to heaven. Above this ladder is God, and on every round fall the bright beams of His glory. He is watching those who are climbing, ready, when the grasp relaxes and the steps falter, to send help. Yes, tell it in words full of cheer, that no one who perseveringly climbs the ladder will fail of gaining an entrance into the heavenly city."—"Messages to Young People," p. 95.

What precious words are these! They were written for you, and you, and you, right here today. Accept them.

At the very end of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians there is a chapter for us. It is as if Paul, an old man, a prisoner for the love of Jesus, in Rome, writing to his old friends in the city of Ephesus, was working along at his manuscript. He had nearly finished when the Lord said to him, "You must put in a page for the children! They must not be neglected." Then looking about the cell, his eye fell upon the soldier put there to watch him, and the thought came, "See that armor the soldier wears? Show them how the Christian must have on an armor, too."

There is the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And Paul tells us that, having put on all these pieces of armor, we are to stand!

God is calling every soul of us to enlist under the banner of Prince Immanuel. He provides the armor. He leads us in a glorious winning warfare. Today He holds out the reward, and invites you to accept His call and to enlist for all your life. It will take all there is of you. It is worth all you are or ever hope to be. He is calling you, "My son, My daughter, give Me thine heart!"

[Songs: "Stand Up for Jesus," No. 115, "Gospel in Song;" "As a Volunteer," No. 112, "Gospel in Song;"]

(Lesson V, Wednesday, December 11)

## God's Plan for Stewardship

THERE is a story told of a pious old servant who grieved over her master's carelessness in his support of the church. The master was generous at times, even very generous. Then again he would give nothing for months. Finally Dinah had an idea. On a day when there was company and generous provisions had been sent to the kitchen for her to prepare for dinner, she was busy at other work until just time for the meal. Then she hastily set on such things as were left over in the pantry, or those things brought in that required no cooking. Her master was astonished, and questioned her sharply, asking if he had not sent everything necessary. "Oh, yes," she said, "but I was busy and just put on whatever I happened to have at hand."

In this way she led her master to see how his careless, haphazard way of giving worked a hardship on the church.

The plan of paying tithe is a very old one. When Abraham returned from the battle with the four kings, he paid tithes to Melchizedek of all he had taken from his enemies. Jacob, on leaving home, promised to pay tithe of all he might acquire while away. Of the children of Israel the Lord was to receive a tithe of all fruit from the trees, the increase of their flocks and herds, and that raised in their fields. This was used to support the services of the sanctuary, and those whose time was given to do this work.

We are told to honor the Lord with our substance, and with the first fruits of all we harvest. The promise of generous blessings and abundant harvest is given to those who

return liberally to God in acknowledgment of His goodness to them. Prov. 3:9, 10.

In Jesus' time, tithing was mentioned as an evidence of piety. (See Luke 18:12.) Jesus commended tithing, but said this could not take the place of manifesting mercy and justice.

It is strange how tightly men hold on to their possessions, when over and over in His word God has promised abundant blessings in return for faithfulness in returning to Him tithes and offerings. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." Prov. 11:24.

Sow sparingly, and you shall reap also sparingly. Sow bountifully, and your harvest shall also be bountiful. (See 2 Cor. 9:6.) "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." Isa. 32:20. "Give, and it shall be given unto you." Luke 6:38.

So today one condition of prosperity among God's people depends upon bringing to God's treasury that which is His own. Every blessing that we have comes through Jesus. The system of giving tithes and offerings is intended to impress upon our minds the great truth that our heavenly Father is the source of every good and perfect gift. To Him our gratitude is due. Even the very poor, bringing their small gifts gladly, as did the widow who cast in her two mites, will feel repaid many times over in the blessing God shall bestow.

When our hearts are aglow with love for Jesus, it is a joy to give something in return to Him. This giving comes as a natural result of our giving ourselves to Him. Paul commended a certain church because they first gave their own selves to the Lord." 2 Cor. 8:5. What a small thing it is for us to return to God a part of that which belongs to Him altogether, when we think how Jesus gave Himself for us.

"The spirit of giving is the spirit of heaven." The spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan, the spirit that says, "Get, get, get!"

"God so loved the world, that He gave." And shall not we, who have given ourselves anew to Him, give also?

[Songs: "Gospel in Song," No. 99; "Christ in Song," No. 514.]

(Lesson VI, Thursday, December 12)

## News From the Front

PEOPLE taking a long ocean voyage enjoy going to look at the "log" every day or two. The "log" is a chart on which the course and mileage of the vessel are written up every day at noon. Thus they can see how far they have traveled, and just how far they are from the end of their journey.

So we, travelers toward the city of God, rejoice to look for the signs of progress on our journey.

Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." So any news we hear concerning the preaching of this gospel gives us courage; for it assures us we are moving on toward our heavenly home.

Today we shall speak of some things that encourage us. Brother Eric B. Hare, in returning from Burma to work in the homeland awhile, called at different ports en route. He wrote of Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Honolulu, and concluded his letter thus:

"As we neared the homeland we noticed everywhere the letters 'NRA.' It was in shop windows, on cars, on books and papers. And I said to myself, 'Those letters would look fine tacked on our mission work, for truly I could see No Retrenchment Anywhere,—that is, no delay in carrying our message to the world.'"

That is the way we feel when we read the mission reports.

Here is our old friend and pioneer missionary to Africa, W. H. Anderson, writing from the Belgian Congo, where he was visiting. "The work grows harder, but the mes-

sage grows more precious. I long to see its triumph, and I shall see it soon." There are thousands who have been converted in that far-off heathen land.

From northern Nigeria comes a story that makes me happy, because it shows how God protects His word. A man came to the missionary with a coverless book under his arm.

"Can you tell me the publishers of this book? I have a friend who wants a copy. For over four years this man has been trying here and there to get a copy, but has not succeeded. He offered me £5 [\$25] for mine, but I would not sell it for any money. If there is any argument about the Bible, I simply rush for the book, and that settles it."

Looking over the much-worn, soiled book, the missionary found it to be one of the first copies ever printed of "Bible Readings for the Home Circle." The owner of the book said that it came into his possession when he was a small boy, and had changed his whole life. After some further contact with the missionary, this man started attending our meetings and began paying tithe. As we listen to this story, shall we not pray God that he may already have begun to keep God's Sabbath?

From Brazil in South America comes word of forty-two young people who are asking for baptism and wishing to become members of the church.

From western India, Brother J. S. James wrote long ago:

"We have had a number of baptisms recently. The Lord is working on the hearts of the people, and others are getting ready. Calls for teachers and evangelists come to us from every quarter, some of them very appealing, but we are short of funds. The Lord must in some way make up to us for the loss of material resources on which we have depended so much in the past."

And he adds in closing, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Now let us look at New Guinea. Brother G. McLaren, accompanied by ten mission boys, taking with them provisions and supplies, flew by plane 120 miles inland, landing among primitive peoples to plan a new mission base. He writes:

"Yesterday I marked out a proposed mission site close to the airdrome. The boys have already erected a small house, and are working on a larger house for the white worker. . . . The boys are working eagerly all the while. I am sure they will do effective work for us. Already by faith I can see fifty or sixty stations manned by these boys. I have in mind two districts that we must work immediately. The natives are the kind who will make the greatest strides when they accept Christianity. They are a fine type, though very primitive. They are still carrying on tribal warfare, and great care must be taken when traveling among them.

"I have in mind to send Brother Petrie to look after the mission when I leave. We must press on, now that we have taken the first step. I am certain the Lord has led us here."

Can you think of circumstances that would need more courage, more faith in God, and steadier perseverance than these?

Here is another story of a book, this time a half-burned book. The story comes from Venezuela, South America:

"A man purchased a New Testament, but before thoroughly examining it he learned that the priest had forbidden his people to read it. Being a devout Catholic, the man laid the book on the open grate of the charcoal stove to be burned. After he had left the house, his wife snatched it out of the flames, put out the fire, and placed the book on a shelf. Presently the son, his curiosity aroused by the charred book, began to read it. In time he learned from it of the Sabbath, and he began to teach it to some of his companions. Not long afterward a Seventh-day Adventist worker, passing through the town, learned of them and met the leader of the group. A few weeks later he came back and found seven or eight keeping the Sabbath and creating quite an interest in the city."

God uses many ways of preaching His gospel. Sometimes His enemies are used as unwilling instruments in helping by their opposition to spread the truth.

Let us pray our Father to use all possible power to hasten His work to a close.

[Suggested songs: "Christ in Song," Nos. 498, 624, 548.]

(Lesson VII, Friday, December 13)

## The Judgment

THERE are certain expressions running through the Bible that one cannot fail to notice. They are the "day of judgment," "day of the Lord," "day of the Lord's anger," that "great day," and the "great and terrible day." It appears that these all refer to a certain definite time—to the close of this earth's history.

Paul's mention of the judgment made Felix tremble. "As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Acts 24:25.

In the Old Testament, a great preacher wrote to some young men who wanted to do as they pleased, with no thought of obligation to any one: "Very well, young man, go on, enjoy yourself as thoughtlessly as you like, but remember that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment!"

A time of judgment means a time of testing according to some standard of measure. The judgment of all who have followed Jesus will take place before He comes. When Jesus comes, then all will know who have been false disciples; for all such will be left here, and not go to heaven with Him.

In this world it is impossible for us to know the thoughts of other hearts. We have no right to judge each other, because we cannot read the heart's motives. Only God can know our hearts. He will judge us by the Bible, which has been given us as the guide of life. He will judge us by the light and blessings which have been sent us. When the Lord makes up the number of the new Israel, He will write in His book that "this man was born here," or there, indicating the privileges each one has had; this means that some will have greater responsibility than others.

In the parable of the wheat and tares the servants wished to pull up the tares as soon as they were seen. But their master told them to wait until the harvest, when the true nature of every stalk would be plain. Then the wheat should be sorted out and put away for safekeeping, and the tares should be destroyed because they were useless.

There are only two products in that harvest, the precious grain and the worthless weeds.

When men construct a building, they test every piece of material that goes into it, to see if there is a weak place in it, or a flaw that will cause it to break down under heavy strain. So our lives must be searched by the strong light of truth, to see what habits we are placing in our character building.

Many stones and timbers look strong at first sight, but when tested show that they cannot be trusted. Many cables are large and look strong, but unless they have been made of the best material, we never dare use them where great strain is involved. Think of the cables that bear the weight of the elevator in some large building. If that cable has only one weak place, it is just as worthless as if it had a hundred weak places.

And most important, when we are putting up a building, we have to be sure it has a good foundation. Not long ago I heard some men speaking sharply about a builder whose houses were all "settling." Their foundations were not good, and the structures began to break down.

Paul said, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." If a life is built on Him, it will stand in the hardest storm.

We think of a diamond as something very precious. One has been sold for ten thousand dollars; and later again for one hundred thousand dollars. At last it was sold

for more than half a million dollars. People can now make imitation diamonds so skillfully that they can hardly be told from the genuine, yet they are worthless. An experienced jeweler can recognize them at once as made of paste.

Some people are like that. They look good and genuine, but later we find out they are insincere, untruthful. We cannot always tell; but God can. He never makes a mistake. No one can deceive Him.

Why did Felix tremble when Paul spoke to him of the judgment? It was because Felix was a wicked man, and he dreaded to have his evil deeds known. Why does the thought of the judgment frighten many people? The very thought of discovery is always terrible to evildoers. If it is a terrifying thought to you, go down on your knees, and pray God to cleanse your heart from everything that is unlike Him. Ask Him to reveal to you every sin in your life. Confess to Him your sins, and make everything right just as fast as He shows it to you. Then, through faith in Jesus, accept His righteousness, and live in daily communion with Him.

Day after day keep the channel of prayer open between you and the Lord, and follow His leadings in all you have to do and say. Following this program, the day of judgment will have no terror for you, because you will know that the Judge of all the earth has been testing you daily, and that you will be accepted in Jesus Christ.

[Suggested Songs: "Christ in Song," Nos. 49, 33, 56; "Gospel in Song," No. 174.]

(Lesson VIII, Sabbath, December 14)

## Jesus Is Coming Soon

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3.

When I was a little girl, my father had often to be away from home. These absences were a sorrow to us children, for father was our best friend and playmate. We were much happier when he was at home. So when he began getting ready to go away, we began planning for his home coming. That was the only way we could bear the thought of his being away.

So Jesus helped His disciples. He knew that His death would be a crushing grief to them. So to help them bear that, He began telling them about His Father's house, and all the plans He had for them there. He told them that just as surely as He was going to leave them, just so surely was He coming back to get them.

Then after His death and resurrection, when He had taken them up on a little mountain, and had been taken up from them into a cloud, while they were still gazing at the place where He had disappeared, two men stood beside them in gleaming white garments, and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

One thing Jesus emphasized over and over, was that He could not tell us just when He would come. He said that no one except His Father knew that. For that very reason we were to be ready for Him at any time. "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

His followers caught the idea, encouraged one another, and talked about His coming. They reminded each other of the different things Jesus said would happen before He comes, and repeated again and again His admonition to be ready.

Naturally, when people look for a beloved guest, they are glad to get ready for him. They keep watching for him. Peter said, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:14.

John spoke of the blessed hope, saying, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself" (1 John 3:3), just as you clean the house, change your clothes, and put everything in order when you look for an expected guest.

Paul loved the thought of the coming of Jesus, and wrote about it in every letter he sent to the churches. Do not question the sureness of Jesus' coming, he told them, "for yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:37.

Sometimes it seems to people that it has been a long time, and they begin to think maybe He is not coming at all. This need not surprise us, for Jesus told us that there would be some who would say, "Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter 3:4.

Surely "it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. 13:11.

Children, Jesus is coming soon! It is almost morning. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." Rom. 13:12.

I remember a time when our mother was away. There had been sickness among us children while she was gone. The home where we were staying was not like our home. The people did not understand us, and we had sometimes been very unhappy and lonely. But one day a letter came from mother, telling us she was coming back soon. She said never mind about the loneliness, or disappointment, or disagreeableness; that she was soon coming back. "Just be brave," she said, "and patient, and do your best; I will soon be home." This letter made us happy.

So today, if you are disturbed by trouble at home, if father has not had work, or some one has been very ill, do not be cast down. Jesus is coming soon. Let us be brave, and quickly get ready. Let us help every one we can to get ready. He is coming soon. May we, every one, be ready and glad to greet Him when He comes!

[Suggested Songs: "Gospel in Song," Nos. 201, 117, 19.]



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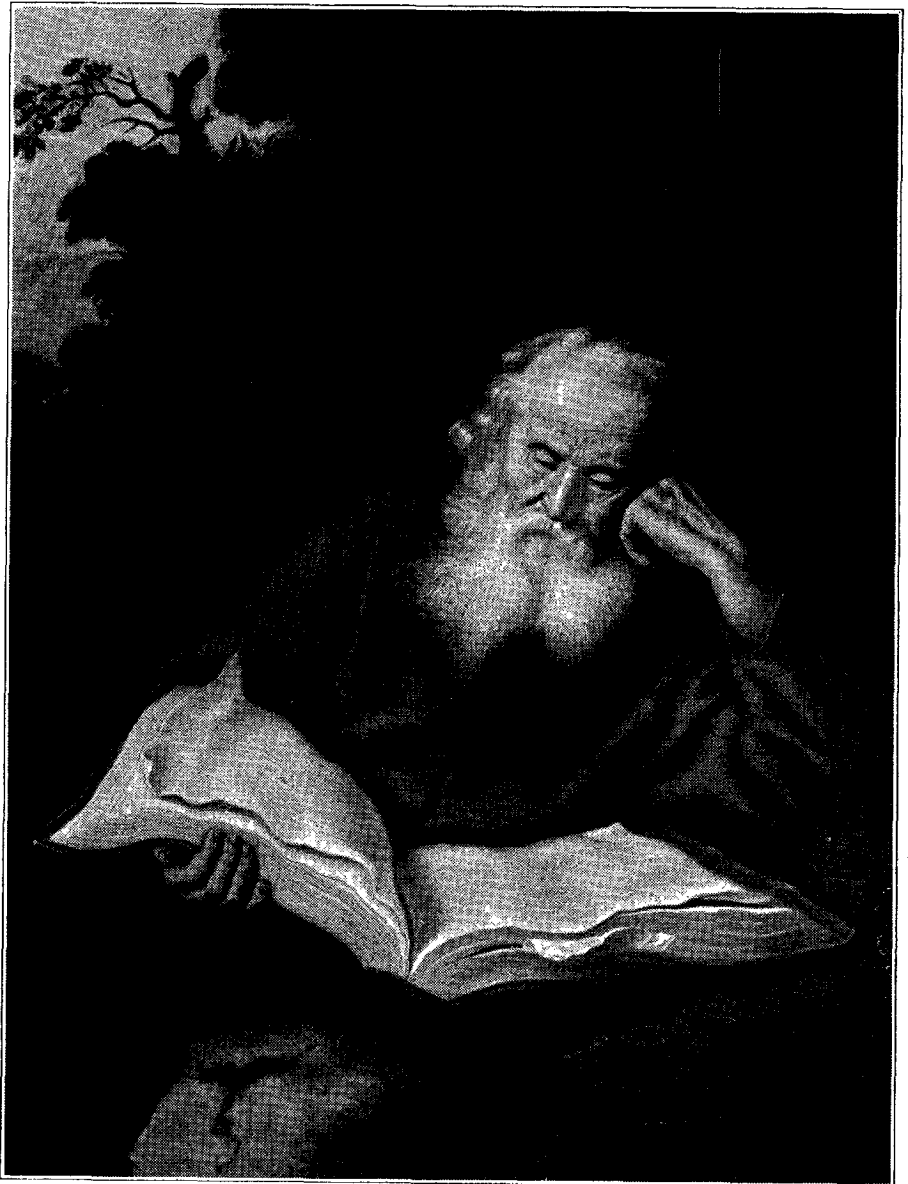
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## To Church Pastors and Elders

THE time has come for another Week of Prayer, and upon the church leadership will rest the chief responsibility of making this annual convocation a season of outstanding blessing to our people. We would urge, therefore, that those who are in charge of our churches begin early to plan for the important work of this prayer season. Thorough organization and careful supervision will be necessary if the meetings are to be a success.

### Organization

1. Arrangements should be made for daily meetings with the churches, wherever it is possible for the members to gather. At these meetings the readings appearing in this issue of the Review should be presented, and this should be followed by earnest seasons of prayer and testimony.

2. Readers for the prepared messages should be selected early, and should be urged to study carefully their assignments so as to become thoroughly familiar with the same, thus enabling them to make the messages their own. They should be urged to read loudly, distinctly, and feelingly. Only good readers should be chosen for this important work.

3. Special meetings should be held daily for the children, and competent leaders should be appointed to take charge of this work. Lessons specially prepared for the children will also be

found in this REVIEW. All the children of the church should be gathered into these meetings.

### Let Us Have a Revival

Let us seek to make these meetings real revival occasions—a time when the courage of the faithful will be renewed and strengthened, and when many of the unconverted will be brought to Christ.

To do this, it will first be necessary for us to get all our people to attend the meetings, and to invite their neighbors and friends. A committee should be appointed well in advance of the meetings to visit all delinquent members and those who were once with us, but who have drifted out of the church, and urge them to attend. Let us bring all these people under the influence of the meetings. Especially let us seek to secure a full attendance of the youth, whether they are church members or not.

Then when a proper attendance is secured, let us seek God, that He may make the meetings occasions of spiritual blessing. There should be frequent appeals for consecration. Altar calls for those who are unconverted should be extended, earnest seasons of prayer should be held, and ample opportunity for personal witnessing should be given.

Many a person among us dates his conversion from some formal annual Week of Prayer service. Let us pray that many more may be born into the kingdom during the coming prayer week.

### Pray in Faith

Our people should be urged to pray in faith. God is on the giving hand, and He will hear our earnest petitions if we will only believe the promises of His word. "Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:22-24. The prayer of faith therefore will bring definite results.

### The Offering

On the first Sabbath of the Week of Prayer the Annual Offering envelopes should be distributed to all the members of the church, who should be urged to come prepared with liberal mission offerings the following Sabbath. Unprecedented calls from every part of the earth demand a decided forward move by this people at this time. We must arise and finish the work. God is beckoning us on. A liberal offering at this time will help to make such an advance possible.

May the God of all grace bless your every effort to the end that this Week of Prayer season may bring untold blessings to all our people in the home churches, as well as to those who, at the ends of the earth, still wait for the coming of the messenger of hope.

GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

THE next General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in San Francisco, California, May 26 to June 11, 1936. We are rapidly approaching this great gathering, and it will be indeed a great gathering of the hosts of Israel. It will have been six years since the last meeting of this kind, in 1930. This movement has made great progress since that date. It has gone out into many new fields; many new units have been added to the organization; and representatives from every part of the world will be in San Francisco to tell us of the gains made and of the blessings received.

The progress of the threefold message of Revelation 14, represented as being carried to the world by swiftly flying angels, will be presented in vivid word pictures by the delegates from Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, Inter-America, Australasia, and the islands of the sea.

It will be the purpose of the REVIEW, just as far as possible, to give to its readers the spirit and setting of this great meeting, to pass on to our brethren and sisters throughout the world field the thrill and inspiration of the interesting reports which will be given and the mighty appeals which will be made. How will this be done? How will the General Conference be reported?

1. A copy of the written reports which will be presented will be furnished us and placed in type before the conference begins, to be released for publication immediately after their presentation at the session. For instance, we shall have in type the reports from the General Conference president, the General Conference secretary, the General

## How the Next General Conference Will Be Reported

Conference treasurer, reports from the vice-presidents of the various world divisions, reports from the secretaries of the General Conference departments, such as Religious Liberty, Sabbath School, Publishing, Educational, and other departments.

2. There will be given at the General Conference a number of missionary addresses. These will be stenographically reported, and speedily transmitted by air mail to the Review and Herald office, to be sent out at the earliest possible moment.

3. During the two Sabbaths of the conference gathering, stirring Sabbath sermons will be preached. These likewise will be stenographically reported and furnished the readers of the REVIEW.

4. The daily morning Bible study at the General Conference will furnish meat in due season to the church of God. Vital questions pertaining to Christian experience and growth in grace will be presented. These daily studies will appear in the columns of the General Conference REVIEW.

5. Perhaps one of the most interesting features will be the minutes of the conference sessions. The resolutions passed and important phases of discussion will be stenographically reported and sent

daily for publication. You may not be able to attend these interesting meetings and listen to the discussions, but the next best thing you may do is to read the stenographic reports in the REVIEW.

6. Another very unique feature will be daily articles written by special reporters. These writers will help you to see the conference in session, to feel its spirit, its enthusiasm, its solemnity, in dealing with the great problems before it. These men will relate many interesting incidents and experiences which perhaps would not be noticed by a casual observer, but would be called to the attention of the keen news gatherer.

These various reports of the conference will be transmitted by air mail, which requires from eighteen to twenty-four hours from San Francisco to Washington. At the office they will immediately be put into type and sent out with as little delay as possible to our readers throughout the field. It will require about twelve extra numbers of the REVIEW to furnish these reports, and these will be included in the regular subscription price of the paper.

We earnestly urge our brethren and sisters throughout the field to renew their subscriptions in order to avail themselves of the information and the spiritual help which we believe the reports of the General Conference will impart. If you are not already a subscriber, we invite you to join our large family of more than thirty thousand subscribers, representing many more readers. Read the special announcement regarding the price of the REVIEW on page 22.