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READINGS FOR THE
WEEK OF PRAYER
NOVEMBER 5-11

A MESSAGE

From the General Conference Officers

WHEREFORE 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). Whatever else men may say, this text declares that God lives and saves. This we believe.

During this Week of Prayer we as Adventists will meditate upon and consider a basic gospel truth. It is simple and in essence just this: It is not knowledge, position, or activity that saves, but faith in Christ and in Him alone. Intellectual discernment and good works have their place in a Christian's life, but faith in, and appropriation of, redemptive grace embodied in a living Person alone can save us. This is foundational to all else.

Beyond controversy, there has been only one means of salvation from the beginning of time—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." And there will never be any other, for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Apart from Christ there is no justification, sanctification, or glorification. He is our sole salvation and only hope. His life, His obedience, and His righteousness are substituted for ours. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

When Christ is made the Alpha and Omega of personal religious experience, everything else follows naturally and inevitably. Obedience, devotion, activity, liberality, sacrifice, and unity with our brethren stem from our relationship to Christ. He is the center, source, and embodiment of all true Bible doctrine. His Spirit, in harmony with the Scriptures, teaches the devout believer all that is necessary for him to know regarding Creation, the Ten Commandments, the Incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, judgment, the Second Advent, and the life to come. Regarding this the servant of God has said:

"The evidence of the truth of God's word is in the word itself. Scripture is the key that unlocks scripture. The deep meaning of the truths of God's word is unfolded to our minds by His Spirit. . . . Those who consult the divine Oracle will have light. In the Bible every duty is made plain. Every lesson given is comprehensible. Every lesson reveals to us the Father and the Son. The word is able to make all wise unto salvation."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 157.

Therefore, during this week we appeal to pastors and church leaders to lead our people into a saving relation-

ship to "the only true God, and Jesus Christ" whom to know "is life eternal" (John 17:3). Let the entire week, as well as the days to come, be devoted not to the doubts, speculations, and suppositions of frail men, but to considering and following Him who is "the eternal God" and "the way, the truth, and the life." On our pathway streams light from Calvary's cross and the heavenly sanctuary. Let us unitedly "walk in the light, as he is in the light," and consecrate our all to the finishing of the gospel commission.

Meet the Writers

Sunday, November 5. R. S. Lowry, president of the Southern Asia Division, is a second-generation missionary. He was born in India, to which country his parents went as missionaries in 1909. He has served the church for 30 years, most of the time in India as an educator, departmental secretary, and administrator.

Monday, November 6. Gordon S. Balharrie is dean of the Walla Walla College School of Theology. His service to the church, which began in Canada in 1935, has been chiefly as a college Bible teacher. His interest in church history has led him to Bible lands and to places of historic religious importance in Europe.

Tuesday, November 7. Marius Fridlin, president of the Southern European Division, was born in France, where he accepted the Advent message in 1928. At the time of his conversion he was an administrator in a commercial firm. He then studied at our college at Collonges, and after a few years devoted to evangelism in eastern France went to Africa as a missionary. In 1946 he was elected secretary of the Southern European Division, and in 1958, president.

Wednesday, November 8. V. W. Schoen is an associate secretary of the Lay Activities Department of the General Confer-

ence. Born in Germany, he became a Seventh-day Adventist while still in his teens, and studied at Adventist colleges in Germany, England, and the United States. He devoted the first nine years of his service to the church, which began in 1932, to evangelism. This was followed by 14 years of mission service in the Inter-American Division. Among his present duties is the training of laymen to share their faith more effectively.

Thursday, November 9. Stanley Harris is an evangelist for the Central California Conference. He began his ministry 30 years ago, as an academy teacher. Over the next few years he was also, in turn, a pastor, an editor, and an associate secretary in the General Conference Religious Liberty Department. In 1953 he took up public evangelism, and has served as a union and conference evangelist in the Southwest, the North Pacific, and the Pacific Union conferences.

Friday, November 10. Charles D. Brooks is stewardship secretary for the Columbia Union Conference. He comes from North Carolina, and attended Oakwood College in Alabama. His first post of duty was as pastor of two churches in Chester, Pennsylvania. Over the years he has been a pastor in New Jersey and Ohio, his last pastorate being in Cleveland, where he served the largest constituent church of the Allegheny Conference.

Sabbath, November 11. Robert H. Pier-son, president of the General Conference, was ordained a minister in 1936 in Poona, India. He has served in departmental and administrative posts since 1933. Much of his life has been spent in overseas divisions—Inter-America, Southern Asia, and Trans-Africa. He is the author of 12 devotional and inspirational books.

The Children's Lessons. Joe Engelkemier is a Bible teacher at Glendale Union Academy in Glendale, California. He became an Adventist in 1946, graduated from Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, and later studied at the SDA Theological Seminary. He has served in denominational schools in Colorado and California, and has been teaching Bible at Glendale Academy for 13 years. He has written for a number of denominational publications.

THE COVER picture on this Week of Prayer REVIEW is of unusual significance. It graphically symbolizes the great need of the church for closer communication with God through prayer. The hands on the clock point not only to earth's last hour but to the hour for the Sabbath morning worship service, when every member of every family should seek our loving heavenly Father for that most treasured gift, the indwelling Saviour, who alone can bring peace to troubled hearts. The picture is the product of the Review and Herald art department staff.

Christ My Need

By ELLEN G. WHITE

THE church of Christ is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. Its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. Jesus said to the representatives of His church, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

There is no limitation to this command. The good news of a Saviour,—Christ dying as our sacrifice upon Calvary, Christ pleading as our high-priest and intercessor before God, Christ our king and deliverer, coming to redeem His children,—this is the message to be carried to all the world, to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. And the obligation rests upon all Christians. Every one, to the very utmost of his talent and opportunity, is to fulfill this commission. The love of Christ, revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know Him not. . . .

We cannot impart heaven's light unless we have received it. We cannot reveal a Saviour, of whom we have no knowledge. You cannot teach others of Jesus and His righteousness, you cannot portray His matchless love and the fullness of His grace, you cannot picture Him as the Christian's all in all, as the comforter and guide of men, unless your own heart is filled with His love. You will not be able to present God as a God of compassion and love unless you can say, "I have tasted, and know that the Lord is good."¹

Every Man Needs Christ

In his sinless state, man held joyful communion with Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." But after his sin, he could no longer find joy in holiness, and he sought to hide from the presence of God. Such is still the condition of the unrenewed heart. It is not in harmony with God, and finds no joy in communion with Him. . . .

Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job 14:4. "The carnal mind is enmity against

God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.

New-Birth Experience Essential

The Saviour said, "Except a man be born from above," unless he shall receive a new heart, new desires, purposes, and motives, leading to a new life, "he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3, margin. The idea that it is necessary only to develop the good that exists in man by nature, is a fatal deception. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." John 3:7. Of Christ it is written, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men,"—the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." John 1:4; Acts 4:12.

It is not enough to perceive the loving-kindness of God, to see the benevolence, the fatherly tenderness, of His character. It is not enough to discern the wisdom and justice of His law, to see that it is founded upon the eternal principle of love. Paul the apostle saw all this when he exclaimed, "I consent unto the law that it is good." "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." But he added, in the bitterness of his soul-anguish and despair, "I am carnal, sold under sin." Rom. 7:16, 12, 14. He longed for the purity, the righteousness, to which in himself he was powerless to attain, and cried out, "O



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wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Rom. 7:24, margin. Such is the cry that has gone up from burdened hearts in all lands and in all ages. To all, there is but one answer, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.²

Union With Christ

Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the author but the finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Ps. 16:8.

Do you ask, "How am I to abide in Christ?"—In the same way as you received Him at first. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Col. 2:6. "The just shall live by faith." Heb. 10:38. You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believed that He for Christ's sake did all this for you. By *faith* you became Christ's, and by *faith* you are to grow up in Him,—by giving and taking. You are to *give* all,—your heart, your will, your service,—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must *take* all,—Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGES FOR THE WEEK OF PRAYER

To Be Read in All Seventh-day Adventist Churches, November 4 to 11, 1967

everlasting helper,—to give you power to obey.³

Utter Dependence

A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first, and last, and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a relation of utter dependence to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment, as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome, if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is, they try to attach themselves to Christ without detaching themselves from these cherished idols. . . .

Believers become one in Christ; but one branch cannot be sustained by another. The nourishment must be obtained through vital connection with the Vine. We must feel our utter dependence on Christ. We must live by faith in the Son of God. That is the meaning of the injunction, "Abide in me." The life we live in the flesh is not to the will of men, not to please our Lord's enemies, but to serve and honor Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. A mere assent to this union, while the affections are not detached from the world, its pleasures and its dissipations, only emboldens the heart in disobedience. . . .

Character and Conduct Changed

Until the heart is surrendered unconditionally to God, the human agent is not abiding in the True Vine, and cannot flourish in the Vine, and bear rich clusters of fruit. God will not make the slightest compromise with sin. If He could have done this, Christ need not have come to our world to suffer and die. No conversion is genuine which does not change both the character and the conduct of those who accept the truth. The truth works by love, and purifieth the soul.⁴

It is Jesus that we need; His light, His life, His spirit, must be ours continually. We need Him every hour. And we should pray . . . that as the sun illuminates the landscape, and fills the world with light, so the Sun of Righteousness may shine into the chambers of mind and heart, and make us all light in the

Lord. We cannot do without His presence one moment. The enemy knows when we undertake to do without our Lord, and he is there, ready to fill our minds with his evil suggestions that we may fall from our steadfastness; but it is the desire of the Lord that from moment to moment we should abide in Him, and thus be complete in Him. . . .

God designs that every one of us shall be perfect in Him, so that we may represent to the world the perfection of His character. He wants us to be set free from sin, that we may not disappoint Heaven, that we may not grieve our divine Redeemer. He does not desire us to profess Christianity, and yet not avail ourselves of that grace which is able to make us perfect, that we may be found wanting in nothing.

Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish. We are seldom, in all respects, placed in the same position twice. We continually have new scenes and new trials to pass through, where past experience cannot be a sufficient guide. We must have the continual light that comes from God. Christ is ever sending messages to those who listen for His voice.⁵

Looking Steadily to Jesus

Look unto Jesus in simplicity and faith. Gaze upon Jesus until the spirit faints under the excess of light. We do not half pray. We do not half believe. "Ask, and it shall be given you." Luke 11:9. Pray, believe, strengthen one another. Pray as you never before prayed that the Lord will lay His hand upon you, that you may be able to comprehend the length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.⁶

There are many flippant talkers of Bible truth, whose souls are as barren of the Spirit of God as were the hills of Gilboa of dew and rain. But what we need is men who are thoroughly converted themselves and can teach others how to give their hearts to God. The power of godliness has almost ceased to be in our churches. And why is this? The Lord is still waiting to be gracious; He has not closed the windows of heaven. We have separated ourselves from Him. We need to fix the eye of faith upon the cross and believe that Jesus is our strength, our salvation.⁷

Our condition through sin has become preternatural, and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there

cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature.⁸

Our Greatest Need

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. We must have the holy unction from God, the baptism of His Spirit. This is the only efficient agent in the promulgation of sacred truth.

It is the Spirit of God that quickens the lifeless faculties of the soul to appreciate heavenly things, and attracts the affections toward God and the truth. What we need, what we cannot do without, is the power of the Holy Spirit to work with our efforts. All pampering of self must be at an end. There is a weakness of intellect, a lack of religious fervor, in those who want to lean upon others, to be petted, waited on, and propped up. There must be an earnest longing, a soul-hunger, for the presence of the Lord. Make Him your support, your front guard and your rearward. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." He who has endowed the human mind with all its powers, will so mould these capabilities that there will be no extremes; all will act harmoniously.

Invite Jesus In

It is a case of life or death with us. We have been stricken with spiritual paralysis, and everyone needs the help of the Great Physician. He alone can reach our case. He is only waiting to be invited by us with earnest heart, with sincere desire. Nothing is wanting but a preparation of heart; we are to clear away the rubbish, open the door, and invite Jesus to come in and abide with us. Simple, earnest, believing prayer always brings Him to our side as a mighty helper. He says to us, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." He longs to come in; He is only waiting for us to prepare the way, to open the door, and He will come in.

A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. When churches are revived, it is because some individual seeks earnestly for the blessing of God. He hungers and thirsts after God, and asks in faith, and receives accordingly. He goes to work in earnest, feeling his great dependence upon the Lord, and souls are aroused to seek for a like blessing, and a season of refreshing falls upon the hearts of men.

Many are weary of their half-hearted service. Their souls cry out after the living God. They cannot be satisfied with a form of godliness; they long for the deep

movings of the Holy Spirit. Let the weary, discouraged one cry, as did Jacob, for the Comforter. Let him lay bare his soul in the secret place before God. Let him with loathing put away soul-defilement. The work is between him and his God.

God is at work; He doeth wonders; and although He is high and lifted up, prayer will reach His throne. He that is turning and overturning, He that can do marvelous things, will regard the contrite prayer of faith from the humblest of His children.

Look Unto Jesus

We are not to look at ourselves. The more we dwell on our imperfections, the less strength we shall have to overcome them. Jesus says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." It is not necessary for us to be ever stumbling and repenting, and writing bitter things against ourselves. It is our privilege to believe the promises of the word of God, and accept the blessings that Jesus loves to bestow, that our joy may be full.

Put away all doubt. Dismiss your fears. Obtain the experience that Paul had when he exclaimed, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but

Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Surrender everything to Christ, and let your life be hid with Christ in God. Then you will be a power for good.

The Lord did not lock the reservoir of heaven after pouring His Spirit upon the early disciples. We also may receive of the fullness of His blessing. Heaven is full of the treasures of His grace, and those who come to God in faith may claim all that He has promised.

I beseech you to keep reaching out after God, to keep drinking of the Fountain of living water. You may be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, whose leaf does not wither. You may be full of moisture, and be able to refresh others, and to impart to them grace and comfort.⁹

REFERENCES

- ¹ Reading for Sabbath, Dec. 27, 1890, in *The Home Missionary*, November, 1890.
- ² *Steps to Christ*, pp. 17-19.
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 70.
- ⁴ *The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on John 15:4, pp. 1143, 1144.
- ⁵ *My Life Today*, p. 15.
- ⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 214.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 166, 167.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 291.
- ⁹ Reading for Sabbath, Dec. 27, 1890, in *The Home Missionary*, November, 1890.

Reading for
Sunday, November 5, 1967

Christ My Substitute

By R. S. LOWRY

THE story of man's creation and fall is familiar to all Christians. As one contemplates the tragedy of the occasion, his heart is touched in the realization of what must have been an unutterable sadness for Adam and Eve as they came to recognize that their lack of faith in God and the justice of His law had brought upon them the sentence of death and separation from Him.

The Lord God had said: "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, . . . ye shall not eat . . . , neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Gen. 3:3). Herein was the indication that an unwillingness to accept God's word and live by it must inevitably result in death. Suddenly, through disbelief, man had succumbed to the tempter's lure and must suffer the consequences, for "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

But not only man was pained by the entry of sin into human existence, so also was God! Divine love was, in fact,

"stirred to its unfathomable depths for the sake of men" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 825). In the midst of the tragedy by which His creation was subjected to the ravages of sin, and almost at once when man spurned the divine counsels, God set in motion the plan of salvation, which had been in readiness against such an eventuality "from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). Simultaneously with the pronouncement of judgment upon the lonely pair, God's great and everlasting love was revealed to man in the promise of victory in the conflict to ensue between his seed and that of the serpent. Christ Himself pledged to become man's "substitute and surety," for He could not contemplate the human race "exposed to eternal ruin without

pouring out His soul unto death in their behalf" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 157).

Such a victory, however, could only be possible by the demonstration of the justice of God's law, for the validity of its foundation of love had been challenged. Hence, since the law demanded death as the penalty for disobedience, so also should the Author of the law be prepared Himself to meet its demands. "The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but One who could, *in behalf of man*, satisfy its claims."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63. (Italics supplied.) Thus it was, we are told, that infinite love impelled the Father and Son to make the necessary sacrifice, that it might be demonstrated to the universe "that justice and mercy are the foundation of the law and government of God" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 503).

Law Requires Obedience

But more than this, in order to substitute for man in meeting the penalty of the law, its requirements of obedience had also to be met. Therefore, it became imperative that Christ should live upon earth as a "lamb without blemish" in order to provide a satisfactory atonement and qualify to pay man's ransom. Of this we read: "Jesus died, the just for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty, that the honor of God's law might be preserved." —ELLEN G. WHITE in *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 15, 1896, p. 5.

The psalmist says, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary" (Ps. 77:13). Through the sacrificial service it was intended that man would be led to look backward to the separation which took place in Eden due to his lack of faith in God's word; also that he would be led to look forward through faith to the time of the promised reunion, as the "Lamb of God" would die in substitution for him and take "away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Just as a lack of faith had led to man's downfall, so "faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 366). To this end the daily sacrificial services were to symbolize the need for "daily consecration" and "constant dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 352). While they were to be a reminder that "according to the Law . . . everything is cleansed by blood and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22, N.E.B.),* they were also to point to the fact that "the revelation of God's love to man centers in the cross" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 423). Thus it was that faith in the "seed of the woman" was also to represent faith in receiving pardon through the merits of Christ's redeeming blood.



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In the Garden of Eden, Satan attempted to discredit God by questioning the reasonableness of His law. "Yea, hath God said?" he jeered (Gen. 3:1). Today his attack is no different! At that time Eve was led to place trust in the reasonableness of her own deeds; today thousands are urged to depend for their salvation upon their good works (see *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 175, 176). In fact, the principle that man can and must save himself by his good life lies not only at the heart of every heathen religion and philosophy but it is also woven into the fabric of much that is called Christian. This disposition to self-reliance Satan would encourage through the proud heart which strives to earn salvation in order that man might not benefit by the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, for he recognizes "both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 300).

In a sense Eve's sin was a reliance upon self, to the extent that this drew her away from simple faith in a "Thus saith the Lord" and toward rationalism as a way of life. The word of truth indicates that "God, who is rich in mercy," shows "his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" and would offer salvation and a return to our lost estate "by grace . . . through faith" as a "gift of God" (Eph. 2:4-8). So, "the law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law. . . . The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 367. On the other hand, "it is Satan's studied purpose to keep souls from believing in Christ as their only hope."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 162. Nevertheless, man must center his "hopes of heaven upon Christ alone, because He is our substitute and surety."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 363.

No Righteousness in Man

Obviously, the picture that God would have us comprehend is that in man there "dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18), that among men "there is none righteous" (chap. 3:10), that man "has nothing of his own but what is tainted and corrupted, polluted with sin, utterly repulsive to a pure and holy God" (*ibid.*, p. 342). But while we were powerless to help ourselves, Christ died for sinful men.

Regarding this the servant of God has said: "The enemy of God and man, is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 161. Much of Satan's victory will be due to man's lack of understanding and appreciation of the nature of this great salvation available to him through the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ.

On this point, however, Scripture is plain enough when it says, "Under this divine 'system' a man who has faith is now freely acquitted in the eyes of God by His generous dealing in the Redemptive Act of Jesus Christ" (Rom. 3:24, Phillips).† Thus it may be said, "Those only who realize that the cross is the center of hope for the human family can understand the gospel that Christ taught."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 206.

"In the atonement the character of God is revealed."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 501. The beauty of the theme of salvation emerges, in fact, in that "God so loved the world" (John 3:16). "It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 49. In such a context it is impossible to portray what Jesus, the Son of God, went through in becoming "numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). What anguish of heart there must have been as He was "despised and rejected of men"! What pain must He have felt when He was "wounded for our transgressions" (verse 5)! What burdens He must have borne as He approached the crisis hour and struggled in the Garden of Gethsemane with the fate of the human family in His hands!

The Compulsion to Sacrifice

Jesus recognized that "the earth was dark through misapprehension of God." He realized that in order that "the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken." He sensed also that "this could not be done by force. . . . Only by love is love awakened" (*ibid.*, p. 22). These realizations, coupled with love, constituted an inner compelling power which led to His sacrifice. That He suffered anguish of heart was due to His "sense of God's wrath against sin." This was "crushing out His life" (*ibid.*, p. 687). It was His realization of the "malignity of sin" and the fact that man through "familiarity with evil . . . had become blinded to its enormity" which weighed upon Him. "It was not the pain and ignominy of the cross that caused His inexpressible agony." It was rather the sight of multitudes "within reach of abundant help" yet marching heedlessly toward eternal death that made for the "oppressive gloom" (*ibid.*, pp. 752, 753).

In so far as Jesus Himself was concerned, there was no question as to His own fate, for there was no necessity that He should die for Himself. "Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 371. He

committed no sin; His life was acceptable to the Father, and as a man He had right to eternal life on the ground of perfect obedience. The devil had no claim upon Him. The necessity for death lay wholly in the destiny of sinful man! That this issue constituted a great personal struggle, however, is revealed in the fact that as the "awful moment . . . which was to decide the destiny of the world" arrived, we are told, "the fate of humanity trembled in the balance."

The fact was that Christ might even then "refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty men. . . . He might say, Let the transgressor receive the penalty of his sin, and I will go back to My Father."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 690. At this crucial time, anxiety must have gripped Satan as he realized the import to him and his followers of Christ's pending decision. Likewise, the Father must have drawn near, for He, too, realized that any defection on the part of Jesus at this moment would mean that no man could be saved! But Jesus was "obedient unto death" (Phil. 2:8). And so it was that Jesus, "who knew no sin," became "sin for us" that we through faith in Him might have right to eternal life (2 Cor. 5:21).

Accepting the Provision

We face the day in the not-too-distant future when we must stand before the judgment bar of God, for we live in the time when "the hour of his judgment is come" (Rev. 14:7). Furthermore, as the apostle Peter has said, "judgment must begin at the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17). Now, while we may have looked upon these references in relation to time (in the light of the investigative judgment), we are not wrong in noting that the primary point being made by the apostle here is the need for God's people to heed and accept the gospel provision, for he continues: "If it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

How much more pertinent the question becomes when we put it to ourselves, who have been the commissioners of the gospel, the ambassadors of Christ! We must recognize that "man . . . cannot, by mere human effort, effect a radical change in himself. He must accept the provisions of the gospel; he must be reconciled to God through obedience to His law and faith in Jesus."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 294. If as prospective heirs of the kingdom we are to achieve our purpose, we must exercise the principle that it is "through Christ, and Christ alone, [that] the springs of life can vitalize man's nature, transform his tastes, and set his affections flowing toward heaven."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 341.

While only one way to salvation is presented, we can say with the apostle Paul, "A great door and effectual is opened" (1 Cor. 16:9). "No sin can be commit-

† From *The New Testament in Modern English*. © J. B. Phillips 1958. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

ted by man for which satisfaction has not been met on Calvary."—*Ibid.*, p. 343. The substitution for our sins has been complete, for we are told, "The sins of every one who will receive Christ were set to His account, and He has fully satisfied the justice of God."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 429. However, complete as the provisions of the gospel may be, they are never any more effective to us than our reliance upon the Saviour will permit! One has fully to accept the fact of Christ's substitution on his behalf, or it is of no avail to him.

Christ Substitutes for Us

If ever there was a man who recognized that Christ died in his stead, though perhaps without the realization that this death was in substitution for man's sins, it must have been the malefactor Barabbas. As he stood amid the crowds that watched the scene at Golgotha and gazed upon his comrades in thievery hanging one on either side of Jesus, he must have mused in bewilderment: There hangs Barabbas, except for that One, Jesus Christ! And as Jesus cried out in agony

and "gave up the ghost," Barabbas must have thought in relief: It is done! That man has died in my stead! Herein the wrongdoer realized that his debt to society had been paid by another and that he, though unworthy, need no longer face the penalty of the law.

And so it was; and so it shall be! Jesus was made "to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

"Surely he hath borne *our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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" (Isa. 53:4, 5).

Should we not exclaim: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard . . . according to his own will?" (Heb. 2:3, 4).

"It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 44.

Reading for
Monday, November 6, 1967

Christ My Righteousness

By G. S. BALHARRIE

WITHIN the borders of a country there are few restrictions on travel. You can go from one state to another or from one province to another without difficulty. But it is a different matter when you attempt to cross the boundary into another country. At the border you will be required to stop for inspection by the immigration and customs officers. If you are traveling in a foreign country, officers will certainly ask, "Where is your passport? I would like to see it." If you have a valid passport all goes well, but if not your journey into that country stops right there.

When you travel by air you will find your tickets in a convenient paper folder called a gate pass. Written on this pass is your flight number and destination. As you board the aircraft the stewardess will glance at this simple document, smile courteously, and direct you to your seat. It is just that easy. The giant airliner you have boarded may carry you at the speed of sound to some distant city thousands of miles away.



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Tickets of admission permit you to enjoy programs and musical concerts. A membership card will admit you to the benefits of the club or society to which you belong. Thus we see that many of life's privileges and pleasures are easily available to us when we have the necessary identification in the form of tickets, cards, and passports. But it is also clear that such benefits are not available to those who have failed to obtain these necessary documents.

As Christians, our interests and objectives reach far beyond the passing pleasures of this present world. We are looking forward to the time when it will be our delight to "wing our tireless flight to worlds afar." Everlasting life, eternal joy, and a home in the earth made new are some of the goals we have in mind. But how can we be sure of reaching

them? What kind of ticket do we need for admission to the kingdom of God? How can we obtain a pass through the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem? It is evident from the Bible, especially in the teachings of Jesus, that some will enjoy the blessings of the world to come while others will not.

In Christ's conversation with Nicodemus (John 3) the Lord indicated that even a clear personal record and unblemished pedigree back to Abraham would not suffice for entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Nicodemus must be prepared to produce evidence to show that he had been "born again." When Jesus depicted the judgment scene He vividly represented two classes of people, the "sheep" on the right hand and the "goats" on the left. Those on the right were invited to "come," while those on the left were told to "depart." What was it that made the difference? The one group had fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and visited the sick. The others had neglected to do this (Matt. 25:31-46).

In the parable of the Talents the "good and faithful" servants entered into the joy of their lord, while the "wicked and slothful" servant was cast "into outer darkness" (Matt. 25:14-30). In the parable of the Ten Virgins (verses 1-13), the young ladies with the lighted lamps were welcomed to the wedding, while for the others the door was shut and they were on the outside.

The Wedding Garment

On another occasion Jesus related the story of a wedding feast where the guests were provided with special clothing so that everyone might be properly dressed. However, one man tried to get in without a wedding garment and temporarily he was successful—in much the same way that counterfeit Christians may get into the church. But the vital question is, How will they stand in the judgment? This man faced his hour of judgment when the king came in to greet the guests. The poor fellow was certainly very conspicuous; he was also speechless. But the king knew exactly what to say. His orders were, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away." That wedding robe which he so desperately needed made all the difference between acceptance and rejection.

Could it be that the wedding garment is also our greatest need today? What does it really symbolize in actual Christian experience? Notice these significant words from *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 310: "By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess." Does this mean that a "pure, spotless character" is absolutely necessary if we are to be admitted to the courts of glory and receive the gift of eternal life? These words from *Steps to Christ*, page 62, are right to the point:

"The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been,—just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents,—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness."

We may have good health, a good appearance, and attractive clothes. We may feel that we are rich and increased with goods. But in all honesty many of us would hesitate to claim that we have a "spotless character" or "perfect righteousness." In fact, some of us might go so far as to say that by nature we do not have anything that could be called righteousness. And it would be easy to find Biblical support for such a point of view. In Old Testament times the psalmist declared that "there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. 14:3). Paul quotes this passage and then comments, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). Apparently the natural man is destitute of righteousness; yet this is the very thing we must have for entrance into the kingdom of God.

Finding Righteousness

When one is thirsty he goes to a fountain, a spring, or a well of water to obtain a drink. When he is hungry he goes where there is food. It was Job who asked, "Where shall wisdom be found?" (Job 28:12). For us the great question is, Where shall righteousness be found?

Some people have no regard for right living, but delight in wickedness and enjoy a certain zest for the pleasures of sin. Christians are not like that. We hate the sin that caused the death of the Son of God, yet we keep on sinning. Paul was facing this same problem when he said, "For what I do is not what I want to do, but what I detest. . . . The good which I want to do, I fail to do; but what I do is the wrong which is against my will" (Rom. 7:15-19, N.E.B.).*

A plumber who was noted for his profanity decided to change his ways and become a Christian. His associates watched him carefully to see what effect religion would have on his language. One day as he pulled hard on a heavy wrench it suddenly slipped and badly bruised his hand. Previously an accident like this would have produced such a torrent of torrid terms as to turn the air blue. But this time he suffered in silence and bit his lip as beads of perspiration stood out on his brow. A few moments later when the internal tempest had subsided, one of his fellow workmen remarked, "Good for you, Bill, you made it." To which he replied, "Well, thanks a lot, but I have a long way to go yet. I must not be satisfied merely to control my tongue and refrain from swearing. I must come to the place where I no longer feel like swearing!" That's it; but how do we come to that place?

Yes, how do we come to that place? Down deep in our heart we want to forgive that brother who has wronged us. We would like to be reconciled to him, but our pride or the desire to get even dries up the healing springs of the soul and leaves us to wither in the wilderness of hate. We do not want to covet our neighbor's house or his fine car or his job, but nevertheless we often do. We long for purity of thought and life, but how can we get it?

Struggles such as these create real conflicts in human hearts. Yes, even in the hearts of Christian men and women. As the apostle Paul expressed it, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18). Well, Paul, did you ever find it in your experience?

For a great Christian like Paul there could be but one answer. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). This sounds wonderful, Paul; we are thrilled by your triumphant affirmation of faith. We are convinced that Christ must have strengthened you for those extensive missionary journeys, and helped you to endure so nobly the many bitter persecutions you faced. But what about your personal life and your search for righteousness—was Christ adequate for your needs here too? Hear his answer: "For to me to live is Christ" (chap. 1:21). "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). "Christ Jesus . . . is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30).

You recall the story of the man and the wedding garment. That garment "represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess"—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 310. But where do we get this "pure, spotless character"? Continuing the quotation, we read: "It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour."—*Ibid.*

The Gift of Righteousness

Paul refers to this experience as "the gift of righteousness" (Rom. 5:17). Jesus is our source of righteousness, which we receive as a gift. The moment I accept Christ as my Saviour, at that very moment I have in my possession a ticket for eternal life. "The righteousness by which we are justified" "is our title to heaven."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 35. But how do we reach out and take it? What is the link, the bridge, or the connector that brings us into saving contact with this righteousness of Christ? In a word, the answer is "faith."

Faith accepts it as a fact because God says so. Faith is one of the most powerful forces in human life. We cannot live without it. Every achievement in human

experience is rooted in faith. Now, God tells us that He has adequate supplies of righteousness available for all who wish to accept. It is up to us to take Him at His word. "The only way in which he [the sinner] can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 367.

Righteousness for Today

It is clear, therefore, that the righteousness of Christ covers our past, so that we are no longer haunted by the ghosts of yesterday. It also gives us our title to heaven and meets our needs for the future. But now what about the present? What does the righteousness of Christ do for me today?

Paul would say, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14). What effect will this have on us? By God's grace we will endeavor to bring our lives into conformity with Christ's manner of living.

It is rather easy for us to get the idea that the expression "righteousness of Christ" is merely a slogan or an abstract term far removed from real life situations. But the righteousness of Christ is a practical thing. Actually, this phrase related to all that Jesus did, and in a sense it describes the kind of person He was. To discover what righteousness looks like in actual flesh and blood, we must watch Jesus. He is the incarnation of righteousness. You will recall that when the disciples of John came to Christ with the question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. 11:3), Jesus told them to listen and watch for a while, and then go back and tell John what they had seen and heard. His words were His most convincing witness.

Wearing Christ's Righteousness

Jesus invites us to put on His righteousness and wear it. He knows that we will like what we see, and we will be pleased to notice how wonderful others look when they, too, are covered with the "robe of righteousness" and clad in the "garments of salvation" (Isa. 61:10). This change of "clothes" can produce a marvelous transformation in our lives, for "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). In Romans 8:29 Paul informs us that God would have us "be conformed to the image of his Son," while the apostle Peter reminds us that we are to be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

* *The New English Bible*, New Testament. © The Delegates of the Oxford University Press and the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press 1961. Reprinted by permission.

Ellen G. White gives as the purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry the re-creation of man in the image of God. (See *The Desire of Ages*, page 478.) This means that "the righteousness of Christ will become our righteousness."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 107. This will be evident by the kind of people we are. "The righteousness of Christ consists in right actions and good works from pure, unselfish motives."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 528.

What will be the result of all this in the life of the Christian? "He who lays hold upon the righteousness of Christ may become a perfect man in Christ Jesus."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 150. Thus is made possible for us the pure, spotless character and the perfect righteousness that we need for entrance into the kingdom. But all this is a work of grace which, with our cooperation, God performs for us. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10).

Does God do all this merely to satisfy our own selfish interests and to provide us with a passport to Paradise? Ah, no! The Lord has far greater plans in mind. Christ wants us to be dressed up in His righteousness so that our lives and behavior will be attractive to other poor sinners who need a Saviour. Paul says that he was placed as it were on the stage of a theater (1 Cor. 4:9). Our task is to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). We are to demonstrate in our lives to a wondering world the superiority of the Christian way of life.

Amazing Righteousness

What was there about Jesus that made such a profound impression on people? The Gospel record is filled with such expressions as "they were astonished," "they were all amazed," "they marvelled." In the synagogue at Nazareth the congregation "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (Luke 4:22). When Jesus preached the gospel He used "gracious words." Could it be that more people would come to Jesus today if we did the same? On one occasion when the police were sent to arrest Jesus they returned and reported to the chief priests that "never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

How true this was! The words of Jesus always did something to men's hearts. The righteousness of Christ is concerned with the words that Jesus used, and the manner in which He used them. If we want the righteousness of Christ to be exhibited in our experience, we must give attention to our words and the spirit in which we use them.

Certainly our Christian conversation should be a mighty force to proclaim to the world just what the righteousness of Christ can mean in human lives.

What Jesus did was another thing that made a lasting impact on those who saw Him. Well, what did He do? Peter says that Jesus "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38).

Christ's righteousness in our lives will overflow in blessing to the lives of others. Many people are tormented by fears and burdened with guilt, who need to be told about the balm of Gilead to "heal the sinsick soul."

Jesus captured the attention and interest of the people in His day because He was different. The multitudes marveled at His gracious words, they were astonished as they beheld His loving service, but they stood in wondering amaze-

ment as they witnessed His sacred sacrifice. Something always happens to me "when I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died." And something happened to some people back there who gathered at the foot of the cross to watch Him die. They never forgot that scene. The preaching of the cross became the theme of their message to the multitudes, because here the world could see the lengths to which God was willing to go that we might be saved.

Our task, dear friends, is to lift Him up, "high amid the waiting throng," for He said, "I, if I be lifted up . . . , will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). At the cross we experience the drawing power of the righteous Christ.

Reading for
Tuesday, November 7, 1967

Christ My Power for Holy Living

By MARIUS FRIDLIN

THE automatic pilot in a modern airplane is an outstanding invention. Once while itinerating in the different islands of our Indian Ocean Union Mission, I flew from the island of Réunion to Tananarive, the capital city of Madagascar. Since I knew the captain personally, he invited me into the cockpit to chat. He was alone there that day. The pilot's seat was empty, for he was standing behind it eating his breakfast while we talked together. The plane appeared to be flying without any human attention. What had happened? The pilot, after having reached the prescribed altitude and having taken the right direction, had switched on the automatic pilot. With full security the plane was flying normally and the pilot was able to relax.

Many a Christian thinks that his spiritual life can be compared to such an automatic pilot. He feels that after having attained "altitude" by acknowledgment and acceptance of Christ and having taken direction toward the New Jerusalem, he can leave everything with the automatic pilot and arrive safely in the heavenly city, taking it easy as far as his spiritual life is concerned. But such a theory does not work when it comes to Christian living. In the life of the child of God there is nothing automatic. It is a warfare in which we are actively engaged day after day.

Our dedication to the Lord must be repeated day after day. The apostle Paul puts it this way: "That we henceforth



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be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness . . . but . . . [that we] may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:14, 15, 13). It takes time to achieve such an experience.

We are truly engaged in warfare as we fight against the powers of darkness. Nothing is automatic in our spiritual life. Human beings are prone to take it easy. But can a Christian take it easy when sin becomes powerful, when the conscience is wounded? The formal Christian may think so. He does not care for God's commandments or for the principles of God's Word. Modern men find themselves unable to keep God's commandments, and therefore lapse into unholy living. They take it easy.

The real Christian, however, takes things seriously. Jesus did not go to the cross to enable us to remain as we are. Through His Holy Spirit He wants to make new creatures out of us. That is the

reason why we should consider this problem most seriously. Hebrews 12:14 reads as follows in the Revised Standard Version: "Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." Martin Luther in his German translation says, "Chase holiness." In our modern life everybody knows what "chasing" means. It does not need definition. The increase of speed on land, in the water, and in the air is a characteristic of our time. Everybody is in a hurry and "chases" through life for either money, honor, influence, or power. Many human beings lie along the roadside, victims of this "chase." However, there is a "chase" to which God agrees and which He orders us to make. If only we would use our energy for that "chase" toward holiness, instead of for things that are perishable. "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3).

Holy living has nothing to do with the exaggerated piety of our own strength. To be holy means to belong entirely to God. Christ has fully provided the way by which we can attain holiness: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:19). "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2:11).

Our Faultless Pattern

Ellen G. White wrote: "Christ declared He sanctified Himself, that we also might be sanctified. He took upon Himself our nature, and became a faultless pattern for men. He made no mistake, that we also might become victors, and enter into His kingdom as overcomers. He prayed that we might be sanctified through the truth. What is truth? He declared, 'Thy word is truth.' His disciples were to be sanctified through obedience to the truth. He says, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.' That prayer was for us; we have believed in the testimony of the disciples of Christ. He prays that His disciples may be one, even as He and the Father are one; and this unity of believers is to be as testimony to the world that He has sent us, and that we bear the evidence of His grace.

"We are to be brought into a sacred nearness with the world's Redeemer. We are to be one with Christ, as He is one with the Father. What a wonderful change the people of God experience in coming into unity with the Son of God! We are to have our tastes, inclinations, ambitions, and passions all subdued, and brought into harmony with the mind and spirit of Christ. This is the very work that the Lord is willing to do for those who believe in Him. Our life and deportment are to have a molding power in the world. The spirit of Christ is to have a controlling influence over the life of His

followers, so that they will speak and act like Jesus. Christ says, 'The glory which thou gavest me I have given them.' . . .

"The grace of Christ is to work a wonderful transformation in the life and character of its receiver; and if we are truly the disciples of Christ, the world will see that divine power has done something for us; for while we are in the world, we shall not be of it."—*My Life Today*, p. 252.

Three Agents of Sanctification

Christ, the Son of God, sanctifies us if we accept Him fully, if we seek communion with Him, if we believe fully in Him, and if we act according to His Holy Word and are baptized by His Holy Spirit. These three agencies—Christ, His Word, and the Holy Spirit—can empower us to holy living. "Follow . . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

My dear brethren and sisters, is this our everyday experience? Those among us who profess to be faithful Seventh-day Adventists—do we live up to such a standard, or must we confess our shortcomings? Let us examine ourselves.

It is always helpful to study the story of Paul's life—his conversion and his subsequent life. There we find valuable insight into what constitutes a transformed and holy life.

Paul changed from thinking of self to thinking of the Saviour. He explains his conversion in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." The transformed life is a complete surrender of self, to be lost in one greater than we, that is, Christ our Lord. Paul spoke of being "hid with Christ" (Col. 3:3).

Paul's conversion changed his purpose from persecution of the church to proclamation of the risen Christ. When we are transformed by the everlasting gospel, our purpose in life is also changed.

Jesus died on the cross for many souls who today are persecutors of the church, although they do not realize it. They do not persecute it physically as did Paul, but they do so by other even more harmful methods: unfair, critical judgment of leaders, workers, and members. These jeopardize the progress of the church. Indifference, lukewarmness, and lack of prayer and support retard its growth. The introduction of worldly institutions and programs in the church is detrimental to its success.

When we are truly transformed and live according to the principles of the Bible, such things will be eradicated from our lives. The church and the proclamation of the threefold message will occupy our whole life. Our only concern will be the welfare of our fellow believers, and our greatest task will be the winning of souls.

Dear brethren and sisters, is self crucified day after day, so that Christ may live fully in our hearts? Or have we been unfaithful to our own souls, to our brethren, and to the flock? Does it not happen, all too often, that we preach ourselves and not Christ, exalt ourselves instead of magnifying Christ, so as to draw the eyes of men to ourselves instead of fixing them on the Son of God and His cross?

Bible Study Necessary

Has Christ always been the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, in our everyday lives—the same Christ who suffered while here on earth, and whose second appearing is close at hand? Have we the grace, the meekness, the lowliness, the compassion and love of the eternal Son of God? Do we imitate Him day after day in announcing His last message to others, never wearying in trying to save the lost? His days of fasting, His nights of watchfulness and prayer must be repeated in our lives. Let us always have the fullness of the mind of Christ and follow faithfully in His steps until He comes in His glory.

In regard to God's Word, the Holy Bible, do we emphasize it as we should? Do we honor the Word of God as we should with regular and diligent study? Unfortunately, it so often happens that we give more importance to what men have written, or to men's opinions and philosophy than to the Bible. We should no longer continue to drink from the broken cisterns of humanity, but resolutely turn to what God has said. We need to study God's Word more and more. We need to steep our souls in it in a spirit of prayer and quietness, and not allow the feverish atmosphere of modern times to disturb us.

"This Holy Book has withstood the assaults of Satan, who has united with evil men to make everything of divine character shrouded in clouds and darkness. But the Lord has preserved this Holy Book by His own miraculous power in its present shape,—a chart or guidebook to the human family to show them the way to heaven. . . . This Word . . . is the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world; bequeathed to them, that by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way."—F. M. Wilcox, *The Testimony of Jesus*, pp. 11-13.

"There never was a time when it was so important that followers of Christ should study the Bible as now. Deceptive influences are upon all sides, and it is essential that you counsel with Jesus, your best friend. . . . David declares, 'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.' How many are betrayed into sin, because they have not, through prayerful study of the Word of God, realized the sinfulness of sin, and found out how they may steadfastly resist it. When temptation comes upon

them, they seem to be off guard, and ignorant of the devices of the enemy. We are living in perilous times, and as we draw near the close of earth's history, there will be no safety for those who do not become familiar with the Word of God. . . . Everything that can be shaken, will be shaken. . . . The children of God have reached the most critical part of their pilgrimage; for the nets and pitfalls of the enemy are on every side. And yet with the guidance of the Lord, with that which is plainly revealed in His Word, we may walk securely and not stumble. . . . A voice from heaven is addressing us in its pages."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 190.

"Obedience to God's Word is our only safeguard against the evils that are sweeping the world to destruction."—*Child Guidance*, p. 556.

Importance of the Holy Spirit

The third divine agency—and a very important one—which empowers us to a holy life in Christ is the Holy Spirit. On one of his missionary tours the apostle Paul arrived in the city of Ephesus, where he found certain disciples. The first question he raised was, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Acts 19:2). For this valiant servant of God, that was an important question. What about us, dear brethren and sisters? Have we given the Holy Spirit the place in our lives which He deserves? Are we aware of the need of His teaching, of His action, of His unction? "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John 2:20). How often we have grieved Him by our inconsistent life, worldly-mindedness, and prayerlessness! Let us ask the Lord for pardon and give more importance to this vital aspect of our Christian life.

An old man of limited learning according to educational standards of the world, but wise in the things of the Spirit, was questioned about the Holy Spirit. He was asked, "How can it be true that you have the Spirit in you, while you say you live in the Spirit at the same time?" Fumbling for the right answer as they sat by the fireplace, the old man placed the poker in the fire and left it there. During the few minutes of silence the poker became red hot. Taking it out, he asked, "Would you say the poker was in the fire or the fire in the poker?" The obvious answer was both. When we live in the Spirit, we have the power of the Spirit in us.

Let us who profess to be looking for the soon coming of Christ never become conformed to the world, but seek the full approval of God more earnestly.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" who profess to be "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God" (2 Peter 3:11, 12)?

The way to heaven is often rugged.

Briars and thorns are in the way, but we can cheerfully walk on this rough pathway, knowing that our beloved Saviour once trod it before us. Let us rejoice that we can follow in His footsteps and finally partake of His glory.

Let us strive every day to be Christ-like men and women in the full mean-

Reading for

Wednesday, November 8, 1967

Christ My Example in Service

By V. W. SCHOEN

JESUS CHRIST our Lord left the heavenly courts, all the kingly glory and the adoration of the universe, and came to live with the lost human race. This experience became the greatest story of all ages. He "became flesh; he came to dwell among us, and we saw his glory, such glory as befits the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, N.E.B.).* "In him appeared life and this life was the light of mankind" (John 1:4, Phillips).†

Those who understand this mystery, the accusations of Satan, and the incapability of man to help himself against the evil, are glad Jesus came to this world. With Him came a better understanding of life and a glorious hope for the future. Christ's earthly ministry gave human existence a new meaning, and life itself a new purpose. He restored the lost pattern for our everyday living with God and with men.

"Follow Me"

"Follow me" (Matt. 4:19; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27; John 1:43) was heard daily on the Judean hills and along the Galilean shores, on the busy and restless streets in Jerusalem, in the hostile Temple court, and in the quiet and friendly atmosphere of the homes of kind people. "Follow me" was all that was said many times, and it was meaningful and all inclusive. Some understood Him. They were able to listen to His words and observe His deeds. They saw the truth personified in Jesus Christ, and many great

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ing of the word, and may our whole life preach that Christ lives in us and that we are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus.

"Genuine sanctification . . . is nothing less than a daily dying to self and daily conformity to the will of God."—*Life Sketches*, p. 237.



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PAUL REMMEY, ARTIST

decisions were made. They followed Him and their lives were changed. Jesus said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

It was not always easy to follow Him. Sometimes it meant loss of friends and work, sometimes persecution and suffering. But in spite of all this there were those who followed Him. Whatever the outward experience happened to be, it was evident that those who followed the Master were discovering that the real life had begun.

After Christ's ascension Peter reminded the believers, "To that you were called, because Christ suffered on your behalf, and thereby left you an example; it is for you to follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21, N.E.B.).

"We are to copy no human being. There is no human being wise enough to be our criterion. We are to look to the man Christ Jesus, who is complete in the perfection of righteousness and holiness. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the pattern man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, on Rev. 7:14-17, p. 970. This fellowship means many things for our present life, and it will take us finally, as we patiently and faithfully trace the Master's footsteps, to the very gates of the promised city.

The Great Principle of Life

Christ's daily living and association with men was performed and always guided by a great principle. Listen to His own words as He explains His philoso-

phy of life recorded in the Gospel of Matthew: "The Son of man; he did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 20:28, N.E.B.). And the apostle Paul, looking deep into Christ's unselfish ministry, added that He "took upon him the form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7).

Think of the last supper the Lord had with His disciples. He had done His best in word and deed to explain and teach them the way of God. Now He was at the end of His earthly ministry, and summarizing His teachings and the real meaning of life, He took a basin and a towel and knelt to wash the feet of His disciples.

"Do you realize what I have just done to you?" He asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord' and you are quite right, for I am your teacher and your Lord. But if I, your teacher and Lord, have washed your feet, you must be ready to wash one another's feet. I have given you this as an example so that you may do as I have done. Believe me, the servant is not greater than his master and the messenger is not greater than the man who sent him. Once you have realized these things, you will find your happiness in doing them" (John 13:13-17, Phillips).

Why did Jesus give His disciples such a message? To teach them to be humble? Of course! But it meant much more than that. He called them for service, a service of love (Gal. 5:13). Christians have always understood this great principle. They have known and accepted the fact that we can only follow Christ if we choose the road of service. The great apostle Paul, who himself believed in this principle and gave his life to service in the cause of God, writes to us that we too, being made free from sin, may become servants of God (Rom. 6:22).

Personal Witnessing

What do we mean when we say that we serve God? What kind of service does the Lord expect from us? There may be many complicated theological answers to these questions, but let ours be simple and practical. In being useful to Him in the accomplishment of the plan of redemption we will render God the greatest service. We must be aware of the fact that He needs us. Christ came to this world to seek the lost, and this should be the supreme purpose of life for everyone who professes to be His follower. "We should all be workers together with God. No idlers are acknowledged as His servants."—*Christian Service*, p. 10. Of course, "God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ's, we must share in His work" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 142). For these reasons, "every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver."—*Ibid.*, p. 195.

"The early Christians took this evangel-

istic imperative seriously. They put everything they had into it—time, possessions, and life itself. They counted not their lives as dear unto themselves. As we read our New Testament, we note that nothing happened easily in the early church. Everything was difficult. Someone has described it this way, 'Every footprint in the Book of Acts is stained with blood.' Christians in the first three centuries multiplied rapidly. Their motto in those early days seemed to be, 'We tell it, they believe it, Christ does it.' They seemed to say by their lives and their message, 'We tell it—that is our business; they believe it—that is their responsibility; Christ does it—that is His part in the conversion of the individual.'"—J. M. BADER, *Evangelism in Changing America*, p. 17.

To make this possible, personal witnessing was necessary. On every page of the New Testament we meet the witnessing church. Everyday witnessing became the way of life for Christians. Their religion was for life, and it was worth living. The relationship to God was not only based on a concept of truth but it rested firmly on the fact of a personal experience with Christ. And to talk about this experience was everybody's joy.

Such a life of constant unashamed witness and personal involvement became dynamic and powerful. Yes, theirs was the gospel, and they shared it freely with the world. Imparting, they received. "The more we impart light, the brighter our own light will become."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 139. "It is as we give ourselves to God for the service of humanity that He gives Himself to us."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 81.

"All heaven is looking with intense interest upon the church, to see what her individual members are doing to enlighten those who are in darkness."—*Christian Service*, p. 89. Are we sufficient as individual Christians and as a church for these times?

"If we follow in Christ's footsteps, we must come close to those who need our ministry. We must open the Bible to the understanding, present the claims of God's law, read the promises to the hesitating, arouse the careless, strengthen the weak."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 336.

God's Word is the visible symbol of our movement. In many lands and at many times we have been and are called the people of the Book. Our witness today is based on two unquestionable facts—our own personal experience with the saving grace of God, and the Holy Scriptures, the Bible. Adventism is indeed a religion of the Bible, and those who are truly Adventists must be men and women of this Book of God. The realization of our service to God, or, as we stated before, our personal witnessing, is closely related to the Bible.

The servant of the Lord has told the remnant church that our duty is to "carry the Word of God to every man's

door" (*Evangelism*, p. 434). We are not speaking for ourselves; we are God's spokesmen. His Word is our message. Our responsibility is to open to our fellow men the mysteries of the kingdom of God. This is the service God expects from us. When this happens, lives will be changed, and a not-yet-experienced impact will be made upon the world.

Love Responds

It is overwhelming to see how God's people recognize and respond to this responsibility and are living up to God's expectations. The number of those engaged in personal witnessing is increasing steadily around the world. Our dedicated laymen find their way into the homes of their neighbors, visit the hospitals and prisons, and meet the needs of broken hearts and homes with God's promises.

Years ago Ellen G. White wrote: "Many feel that it would be a great privilege to visit the scenes of Christ's life on earth, to walk where He trod, to look upon the lake beside which He loved to teach, and the hills and valleys on which His eyes so often rested. But we need not go to Nazareth, to Capernaum, or to Bethany, in order to walk in the steps of Jesus. We shall find His footprints beside the sickbed, in the hovels of poverty, in the crowded alleys of the great city, and in every place where there are human hearts in need of consolation. In doing as Jesus did when on earth, we shall walk in His steps."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 640.

This is true Christianity, and it offers an abundant life. Its great secret is service, living for others.

A Great Company of Witnesses

Sister Kelly, when I met her last, was 84 years old. After I appealed to the church to engage in a more bold witnessing for Jesus Christ, she approached me with the question, "Pastor, do you believe that I can do it?"

"Of course; you are included and a part of the program. Your witness is needed and it can be powerful for God."

She accepted the challenge and the following year six precious souls were led to Jesus as a result of her personal witnessing.

An eight-year-old lad was out Ingathering. He was really out witnessing for God, because this is what Ingathering is. There was much noise in one of the houses he approached. It was frightening and he was about to leave, but he couldn't. He knocked. The door opened and a pale-faced, elderly woman looked at the frightened boy. "Are you in trouble, ma'am? Can I help you somehow?"

The distressed lady was surprised. "No, I don't think you can help me. My son must have lost his mind and we had to lock him in one of the back rooms. Now he is wild and has destroyed all the furniture. This is what caused the noise you heard."

"Have you asked the Lord to help you and your son?" What a question for a troubled soul from an eight-year-old boy. What a simple and sincere witness for the ever-present Lord. What a service for the Master and what a marvelous help for a troubled heart. We were not present when this happened, but all heaven looked upon the beautiful scene when the mother and the little lad knelt together in prayer.

Yes, friends, most of our witnessing culminates in a miracle. So it happened in this home. Quietness settled upon this house. The door to the back room was opened and out came a new creation. I met the mother and the son the following Sabbath in church, where they told us of God's mercy and love, and praised Him for Christian witnessing.

It is indeed wonderful to be God's partner in the plan of salvation by not only giving of our means but giving ourselves; speaking for God with our own tongue, and witnessing, not through others, but by our own voice. There are still some who do not have this firsthand thrill.

Another layman was being carefully watched by his neighbors. There were some in this group who did not appreciate his daily witness for God. One man in particular wanted to do him harm. One evening while our brother was in a Friendship Circle studying the Word of God, this man removed the pins of the two wheels on his cart and threw them away. He hoped that this would kill our brother as he returned home on the winding and dangerous mountain road.

The layman finished his Bible study and started home. Behind him, unnoticed, walked the evil man, hoping that the next curve would cause the collapse of the wheels, and that our brother, his horse, and cart would plunge into the abyss. But the turn was made perfectly. "The next turn it will crash!" the man said to himself. But to his amazement nothing happened. In spite of the rocks and holes the pinless wheels turned as usual and took the witnessing layman home. He took the horse to the pasture and walked back to the cart to get the Bible and songbook. Then he saw something unbelievable. The two wheels fell off and the cart crashed to the ground. While he was looking at this spectacle, a man stepped up to him out of the darkness and said, "I am convinced that you are serving a living God." Then he confessed the entire wicked plan.

That evening far into the night these two men studied the Word of God. Then they prayed, and a converted soul left the Adventist home that night. Our brother lived up to his Christian obligation—he witnessed for the Lord; he served the Master that night. The number of those "unashamed" witnessing laymen is rapidly increasing. When the entire church becomes of that company, the long-expected "loud cry" will be given

and God will finish His work in a blaze of glory.

They Will Follow the Lamb

On the last pages of the Bible we find a most wonderful prophetic picture. The work is done. The plan of salvation is completed. The witnessing is history. The hope of the working and watching church has been fulfilled. The invisible Christ has become the visible King of kings. God's workmen, the saints of all ages, will see the Master face to face. Those who followed Him here will follow Him there. In Revelation 14:4 we read; "These are they which follow the Lamb whither-

Reading for
Thursday, November 9, 1967

Christ My Advocate

By STANLEY HARRIS

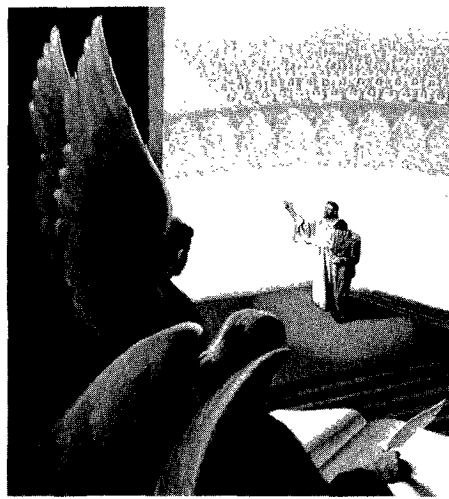
MICHELANGELO stood one day looking at a discarded piece of marble. In it he saw an angel in stone, and determined to release it. God looked down and saw a world of hungry hearts steeped in sin, and He determined to send a Saviour to release them from their bondage. He sent the only one qualified to be the mediator between God and man, between man and man, and between nation and nation. He sent the mighty Daysman, the great Reconciler, the Center of unity. He sent His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus.

The incomparable Christ is the very epitome of the ideal advocate. Pontius Pilate expressed the universal response of both friends and foes when he said, "I find no fault in him." If we would look for the highest example of meekness, we would look not to Moses but to Jesus, who was approachably meek and lowly in heart. For the highest example of patience we would look not to Job, but to Jesus, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again. For the highest example of wisdom we would look not to Solomon, but to Jesus, who "spake as never man spake."

For the highest example of soul-consuming pity we would look not to Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, but to Jesus who wept alone over the ill-fated, doomed city of Jerusalem. For the highest example of zeal we would look not to Paul, but to Jesus, of whom it was written, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." For the highest example of love we would look not to John, but to Jesus, who so loved us, sinners though

soever he goeth." What a glorious revelation of the future. We serve Him here because we hope to serve Him there.

I will never forget the song a little group of dedicated believers sang at my baptism. I vividly remember how, after the second stanza, I joined them in singing, "I will follow Thee, my Saviour." The same song was probably sung at your baptism. Have you followed Him all the way? Has your Christian life been a living witness for the Lord? Have you really followed His example and served Him? Let us renew our consecration today and let us sing as we serve together, "I will follow Thee, my Saviour."



we are, as to lay down His life for us. He is the perfect Advocate.

There is a familiar story of a soldier who was waiting to see President Lincoln. The President's son, Tad Lincoln, was attracted by the uniform and struck up an acquaintance with the soldier. The President's secretary came out and announced that the President would not see anyone else that day. The soldier expressed his disappointment to Tad who said, "If you want to see the President, I can get you in!" The President's son got him in immediately.

Ready Access to the Throne

We do not need riches or prestige to enter into the royal throne room of God. We have an Advocate who wants to take us into the presence of the Father for the help that we need. He not only wants to obtain forgiveness for our past sins, but He wants to obtain the full backing and power of Heaven to support us in our days to come, so that we will live more successfully and uprightly.

It is not necessary for us to scream or bang on the door to gain an audience with God. Actually, our Advocate is waiting to intercede for us whenever we need Him, day or night. If there is any prerequisite for gaining the help we need, it might be summed up in the word "earnestness."

There is a story of a ship that was wrecked and was going down. There were not enough lifeboats. A man swam from the wreck to one of the boats, but they had no room and refused to take him in. When they refused, he seized hold of the boat with his right hand; but they took a sword and cut off his fingers. The man was so earnest to save his life that he seized the boat with his left hand. They cut off the fingers of that hand too. Then the man swam up and seized the boat with his teeth, and they had compassion on him and relented. They could not cut off his head, so they took him in. Why? Because he was in earnest. David committed serious sins, but he sought God with such earnestness and repentance that God loved him and forgave him.

Our Assurance

We have the assurance that "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (chap. 1:9). "The conditions of obtaining mercy from God are simple and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order to gain forgiveness. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression. He that 'confesseth and forsaketh' his sin 'shall have mercy.'"—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 552.

We have another wonderful assurance, that "no sooner does the child of God approach the mercy seat than he becomes the client of the great Advocate. At his first utterance of penitence and appeal for pardon Christ espouses his case and makes it His own, presenting the supplication before the Father as His own request. As Christ intercedes in our behalf, the Father lays open all the treasures of His grace for our appropriation, to be enjoyed. . . . 'Ask in My name,' Christ says. . . . 'Make use of My name. This will give your prayers efficiency, and the Father will give you the riches of His grace; wherefore, 'ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' John 16:24."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 364.

God is waiting for His children to forsake this old sin-cursed world and come back to Him. How long will we make Him wait? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

The beloved wife of a St. Louis businessman suddenly became insane. He was so devoted to her that he gave up his business and devoted all his time to her. When the neighbors complained of her shrieking, he built a house on the edge of the city with all the comforts he could obtain for her. But she showed no signs of improvement. Then an old physician suggested that he take his wife to

the mountains of Tennessee, where she had been reared as a child, with the hope that the scenes of the old Southland would restore reason to her again. But although the birds sang to her as in childhood days, and the flowers smiled at her, she passed through the Southern experience still mentally unbalanced. Completely discouraged, the husband brought her back to their home in the Midwest city. She was put tenderly to bed and, strangely enough, immediately fell asleep. She slept for one hour and then for another, and then through the entire night. When she opened her eyes, instantly her husband knew that she was herself again.

"Where have I been?" she exclaimed, and he, with heart overflowing with gratitude, exclaimed, "You have been on a long journey, and now you are home again." "And where have you been all of the time?" she said, and with a sob in his throat he replied, "I have been by your side waiting for you to come back."

This incident faintly illustrates God's waiting love. We have wandered far from Him, but He has waited. We have gone on our insane journey into the far country, but He has waited, and is waiting for some of us still. Jesus longs for us to come home. He is in the Most Holy Place, the throne room in heaven, waiting for us to come to Him. He wants to be the propitiation for our sins. He wants to wash the sins away and place the garment of His righteousness upon us.

Men talk about their inability to believe in miracles. But Jesus is the outstanding miracle of all the centuries. The searchlight of criticism has been focused upon Him, both by friends and foes, through the long, long centuries, yet it has failed to find in Him one suggestion of sin, one ill-advised word, one selfish deed. He is the universal Man. He was born in the first century A.D., yet He belongs to all centuries. He was born a Jew, yet He belongs to all races. He was born in Bethlehem, yet He belongs to all countries. Let any man, be he Saxon, Teuton, Mongolian, Slav, or Latin, come penitently to this Saviour and put his trust in Him, and he will go his way thrilled with the consciousness that Christ has forgiven his sin and is helping him to bear the burdens of life. He will receive the beautiful garment of Christ's righteousness.

Jesus Brings Us to God

It is said of Mozart that he brought angels down, and of Beethoven that he lifted mortals up. Jesus does both—and more. He is God's way to man. He is man's way to God. He is the true Jacob's Ladder between earth and heaven. He lived as no other ever lived. He died as no other ever died. From Olivet He went back to His Father, the Consummator of history, the victorious Saviour of a lost world. Now He stands ready to obtain peace and pardon for us. This great God

and Saviour, Jesus Christ, not only has the grace and love to forgive but the stolid determination and power to see us through the vicissitudes of this life to complete triumph over evil and sin. All He asks of us is to trust Him and cooperate with Him.

Far up the Amazon River a missionary was using a flannelgraph as an aid in telling a group of children the story of Jesus and His power to save. As she talked, an old man with stooped shoulders and gray hair joined the children. He sat with rapt attention as the missionary told the story of how Jesus came and died for us, and how He had returned to heaven to prepare a place for us to live with Him for eternity. The missionary told them that Jesus forgives our sins and is interceding in our behalf before His Father's throne, that we might be with Him where He is in glory.

After the children were dismissed, the old man came up to the missionary with the question, "May I ask, madam, if this wonderful story is true?"

"Of course," the missionary said. "It is in the Word of God."

With countenance and voice revealing his doubt, the old gentleman said, "This is the first time in my life that I have ever heard that Jesus forgives sins and will give us life with God forever."

Then with a note of finality he concluded, "This story cannot be true or someone would have come before now to tell it. I am an old man. My parents lived their lives and died without having ever heard this message. It cannot be true or someone would have come sooner."

Although she tried hard, the missionary could not convince the old man of this truth from God's Word. Turning to make his way back into the denseness of the jungle and the darkness of sin, he kept repeating the words, "It cannot be true. It cannot be true, or someone would have come sooner."

Christ Obtains Pardon for Us

So many find it hard to believe that Christ is able to obtain pardon for us. Many do not believe that He can cover the sins that are past. Worse than that, they do not believe that He is able to keep us from falling in the future. They seem to be resigned to a life of sin and defeat. For men to say that Christ cannot keep us from sinning is to accuse God of being weak and ineffectual. May God help us to know His omnipotence.

Nathaniel Hawthorne compared Christianity to a beautiful cathedral with its skillfully wrought windows. Viewed from without, these windows do not give the slightest conception of the beautiful forms and radiant colors the artist has created.

On a hot summer day two high school girls had spent most of their afternoon in a leisurely stroll through the downtown section of the city. Suddenly they

found themselves in front of a large cathedral. It was not much to look at because of the dirt-stained outside walls, but they did observe the lofty stained-glass windows which their art teacher had suggested that they see. One of the girls grunted, "Nothing beautiful in that! Just a lot of old dirty glass." A little old lady heard the remark and said, "You can't judge the beauty of an art glass window from the outside. Why don't you step inside?"

The girls went in, and before they knew it they were standing motionless and enthralled, their faces bathed in the symphony of color that was pouring through the windows.

The little old lady was right. You cannot see the beauty of a stained-glass window from the outside.

Beauty Through Faith

The only way that men will ever know the beauty of Christ and the power of His gospel is by their entering by faith into the throne room of heaven. When we are ready to seek His intercession, and accept His grace and victorious power, we will gain beauty for ashes and strength for weakness. Harmony and beauty will shine all around us.

Christ is the only one who can give us the beautiful life in this crazy world, and a glorious future in the world to come. He is the one and only Advocate who can get us in. Men may call as long and loudly as they will on Confucius, Mohammed, Plato, or anybody else for salvation, but there will be no answer and no help. Let a man honestly call on Christ for forgiveness and deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, and Christ answers, and the man knows that Christ answers. The man goes his way with the joyful cry, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

Christ in human experience is the crowning glory of His gospel. He enlightens the mind, arouses the conscience, awakens the will. He dissolves our doubts, puts away our difficulties, girds us with a power above our own, which power gives us triumph over sin and sorrow and death.

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324.

Dedicating Our Lives

The visitor to Edinburgh stands reverently in the old graveyard surrounding the historic Greyfriars church. It was

in that open churchyard, several centuries ago, that a multitude of utterly dedicated men signed the National Covenant, the old Earl of Sutherland himself leading the way. As you gaze upon them that day, do you see what they are doing? They are opening the veins in their own arms and signing the covenant with their own blood. And shall Christ's people, redeemed by His blood, hesitate for one moment to dedicate to Him their all, that He may have His way with them to-day, tomorrow, and beyond—forever?

We often hear it said that today Christ is our Saviour but tomorrow He will be our Judge. It is sad but true, that the One altogether lovely, who stands with outstretched arms inviting us to come to

Him now and be saved, is soon coming to this earth in celestial splendor and majesty to judge all who have refused or failed to accept His advocacy in their behalf in the courts above.

Today is the accepted time. You must do one of two things. You must accept Christ as your personal Saviour and Advocate, or reject Him. You must confess Him or deny Him. You must be for Him or against Him. Neutrality is utterly impossible. No third course concerning Him is possible. Oh, come to Him without further delay! Publicly register your unreserved surrender to Him, to be your Saviour and Advocate, today and forevermore. Let your heart give the unreserved Yes—and say, "Lord Jesus, I come."

Reading for

Friday, November 10, 1967

Christ My Daily Companion

By CHARLES D. BROOKS

MAN was created upright, clothed with the light of God's righteousness, and of pure mind and perfect character. There was no knowledge of sin in him. Thus he was made and suited for companionship with God and angels. Many sorry circumstances destroy rapport between friends, and like infernal weapons from the arsenal of hell, separate companions so that they walk together no more. The sorriest of all circumstances prevailed in Eden. Sin "separated between you and your God" (Isa. 59:2). The inquiry of a bitterly disappointed Saviour was, "Adam, . . . where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9). In other words, What has come between us?

Before this tragic day, somewhere in the remote annals of the past, a counsel was held in heaven and provision was made for this eventuality. Ever since the tragedy of Eden, all heaven has been involved with the carrying out of that plan. All things that were lost through sin will be fully restored, including open companionship of redeemed man with a sinless God and bright angels, but only when man, through grace, is lifted again to the exalted plane of righteousness from which he is fallen. Until then we see the operation of grace.

There is a restlessness in heaven to reach humanity—an impatience with the separation that sin has caused. A tender, loving, long-suffering Saviour will not stay in His place. He interferes, imposes, provokes, thrusts His presence upon us, though He is often rebuffed and insulted



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HARRY ANDERSON, ARTIST

or just left outside knocking and calling.

It may be thought that Christ's reaction on Eden's darkest day was due to the fact that He had committed Himself to death should man sin, and that coming death loomed before Him. Oh, no! This commitment was motivated by divine love; and love never regrets its gift. Christ was deeply hurt in Eden by the impending estrangement sin had caused, for now man could not bear His holy presence and was subjected to the companionship of demons who were unfit company for such helpless beings. Christ would not end His evening's visit in the Garden until some adjustment had been made; and lacking the legal equipment to perform the adjustment, He called on grace. Grace needs neither law nor reason, only love.

Through the blood sacrifice of that awful day He made clear to His fallen children that He would be constantly available. Though He could no longer walk with them in open personal companionship, He would be near. Paved in darkness, He would be near. In altar fires He would be near. In dark and perplexing happenings He would be near. In family worship He would be near. In the hour of prayer He would be near. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not

seen" (Heb. 11:1). Faith must claim the promise of His presence.

Without companionship with the Divine, man could never be redeemed. His thoughts could never be made pure. If deprived of the Saviour's presence, the noble "plan" could never work, Eden could never be restored. The burden of Christianity is to restore in man the image of God so that man can someday look on the person of God again and walk with Him. "It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

Christ Seeks Us

So Christ pursues us, follows us, calls to us, though uninvited and unwanted—in spite of ourselves. Behold the glory of the fiery pillar at the Red Sea! Who sent for Him? Look at the cloud by day! Who invited Him along? Hear Him speak to Moses, "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8). Who asked for His company? You see, Christ pursues man with His presence, and cannot wait for an invitation. The unsanctified heart is content with demons, it is unoffended by evil, and does not desire the presence of God. So Christ, disdaining human ethics, imposes Himself upon man for man's sake—to meet man's need, to save man! Man cannot be saved without the presence of Christ.

He drew near in a flaming bush, on a flaming mountain, at a flaming altar. He is near in fire, and cloud, and wind, and thunder, and trial. At death He points, not to the valley of shadows, but through it to the resurrection morning when men shall be changed; when the corruptible shall put on incorruption and He will take us by the hand and lead us beside the living stream—together forever!

All heaven looked forward to that momentous hour in the fullness of time when He would dwell with His people literally, clothed in human flesh. Isaiah exclaimed, "Unto us a son is given." Oh, wonder of wonders! God incarnate, dwelling in human flesh. In a special sense never before experienced, Christ would dwell with man. The musicians of heaven composed special symphonies for the occasion, and under a baton of light the angel choir sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). Peace because God now dwells with man. He is Immanuel.

The disciples knew that companionship and its concomitant blessing in a very intimate sense. They were secure in dangerous places because He was there. When they were terrorized on the sea that night as Satan whipped up his hurricane, they wanted only that He be aware of the danger. They knew He could handle it, for "no water can swallow the ship where lies The Master of ocean, and

earth, and skies." They walked through mobs of wine-filled rabble because He was there. They slept in the wilds, for He was there. They were bold in His presence. But when Jesus was taken from them, they fled in terror. Gloom and consternation descended like funeral shrouds upon them and their pathways. They knew unspeakable sorrow and grief. Then early Sunday morning they received a message: "Tell My disciples I am alive. I will meet with them today." Uncertainty and skepticism relented to reality as the news spread. Soldiers screamed in the streets that the dead man was alive! Other men who had been dead, whose funerals had been attended and witnessed, were walking through the city preaching of a risen Lord. The church was electrified. Now it is certain that even death cannot rob us of this companionship. Paul spoke with power and eloquence when he said that neither life nor death nor any other creature could separate us from the love of God.

The resurrection of Christ validated Christianity. If He be not risen, our religion is vain. If He lives (and as surely as God lives Christ lives!) this unique gospel could no more be contained by a small Judean hamlet than could the Dead Sea hold the great oceans of the world. Christ directed His disciples to go into all the world and tell it. How could they be asked to leave Him so soon after His resurrection? "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matt. 10:16). But, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (chap. 28:20).

"How, Lord?" they asked. They desired this companionship forever; but how could it be if they were scattered throughout the world? How could Jesus be with His people there, and in Asia and Europe and Africa and everywhere at the same time? How could it be?

To this Jesus answered, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come"

(John 16:7). "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, . . . even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (chap. 14:15-17). Oh, divine secret of the abiding presence! With you and in you—everywhere! Anywhere!

Guaranteed Companionship

This companionship, guaranteed forever, emboldened the disciples and sent them with much power and without fear. Matthew ended his Gospel with a dead Lord coming alive, "And, lo, I am with you alway. . . . Amen" (Matt. 28:20). Mark concluded his written message with these words: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20).

In the fierce persecution that followed He was with them. At the martyr's stake He was with them, and the grim reaper held no fear for them. Paul asked, "Who shall separate us?" When all the disciples were gone save John, the beloved disciple felt the cruel agony of loneliness on Patmos. He felt there was no one left to carry on except himself. Could the success of the church rest with him alone, with him now so circumscribed and restricted? Christ met him in vision and dreary Patmos became a paradise. He saw Jesus glorified and heard Him say in the plain, positive utterance of thunder, making it clear forever for everyone, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (Rev. 1:8).

You are not alone, John. I am yet around and ever shall be. I am! I am with you always. I am with My people always. Then He gave John a vision of Himself among the candlesticks. Constant, faithful company to the churches of all ages, and later in the glorious vision, He revealed Himself as the eternal

Mary's Alabaster Box

By CLIFFORD B. HOWE

When Mary broke her alabaster box
Of precious spikenard ointment rare,
And filled that festive room with its perfume,
Anointing Christ her Saviour there,
A precious light was shed on Calvary,
How Christ was broken there for me.
It filled my soul with fragrance of His love,
The love from all eternity.
O may we fall upon the Rock of Ages!
Be broken, crushed, like scented bloom,
And fill the whole wide world with love's perfume,
As Mary filled that festive room.

pursuer of men, knocking at the door. But He is not content to just knock—He calls. If any man hears My voice, He says—My voice as well as My knock—and will open, I will come in. I will be his companion.

The great men of the earth are usually lonely because they are sealed off from the public. If you should seek a formal audience with a king or president or great man today, the probability is you would not be permitted to see him at all. If the audience were granted, you probably would be investigated thoroughly. If you passed this investigation and your reasons for the audience were deemed of sufficient importance, you would be conducted behind iron gates and armed guards into the presence of but a man, whose secrets and confidences must be shared with the guard assigned to protect his life.

What a glorious thought that Christ our Lord seeks your company and mine! Though we are walled off from Him by iron gates of evil and faithlessness, He knocks, He calls, and if there is any response He will come in. We do not have to be gracious and kind; if we just open the door, He will come in. Into the coldness of our souls He will bring warmth. God dwells in a high and holy place and also with them that are of a humble and contrite heart. What condescension! What love! What grace!

We Need His Companionship

Here is the answer to the lost and hopeless of today. This is the age of unrelenting tension. Men and women and youth seem on the brink of hysteria. Abstractions of governments and formal religions leave the mouth and the heart bitter. Men will not learn the good lessons of history. There is the constant threat of war everywhere. Nuclear holocaust hangs overhead like the proverbial sword of Damocles, by a single thread of providence. This is the age of fear and torment. Men seek peace without the Prince of Peace, and find it not. "There is a storm within the breast that will never give them rest." Great promises are unfulfilled. Hopes are shattered. Dreams are turned to dust. This age needs Jesus! Youth need Jesus. The world needs Jesus. We need His companionship, with all the light and peace and simplicity and restfulness it brings.

Men of the world today turn away from the "Great Physician," the "Light of the world," the "Comforter," the "Prince of Peace." They will have none of His mighty counsel. They despise His law, His way of self-denial, and the golden rule. Their impure minds yield to the demands of the flesh. Licentiousness offers a wretched release from the howling fears and torments of this demon-driven world. The music, the dress, the conversation, the books, the entertainment offered on gaudy altars of sensual pleasure, are

carefully calculated to degrade and debauch and ruin. The obsession with sex and vulgarity consumes noble and clean thoughts and involves the emotions and the body in an interminable orgy that will smother every impulse that strives to be holy and Godlike.

In his final offensive Satan thus seeks to dishonor God and exalt himself. Like Aaron of old many reputable yet pliant leaders and teachers with prostituted intellects build the golden calf of flesh worship simply because they lack the courage and desire to risk the unpopularity of resisting the crowd. In a frantic effort to force God out of their lives and to hush His voice and stop that irritating knocking, they blatantly exclaim, "God is dead!" They claim that the knocking and calling are but a figment of the imagination or some ghost of guilt from our Victorian past. Hence we come to an age of unbelievable gall, when decency is thought futile and virtue stupid, where immorality is "in" and marriage is "out." But there is no joy! No peace! Men have not found rest unto their souls. Instead there is hopelessness, disordered nerves, insanity, suicides, twisted emotions, and darkness.

Do you want peace? Then Jesus says, "Come unto me." Tension, hate, fear, cannot abide in His presence. These are the fuel of hell, but God is a consuming fire. Man was made for companionship with God, and without that companionship he can never be at peace or happy, in spite of his incredible substitutes.

How can we have this company? God is a kind, tender, and loving Saviour who is more interested in us than we can ever imagine. He is not a merciless judge or cold avenger just waiting to get even for our wrongdoings. If He were, He would not have to wait. His way is not a hard way filled with unreasonable prohibitions. Nothing worth having in life is given up when we walk with Him—only that which will wreck and ruin and shame us is surrendered.

Christ wants to be your daily companion. How can you have Him? "Ask, and it shall be given." "Pray without ceasing"—not just once a day, but all through the day. Then believe that He is a wonderful Saviour who is no respecter of persons. He is a loving God who specializes in hard cases. His heaven will be filled with former liars, murderers, drunkards, profligates, and all kinds of sinners who were willing to ask for forgiveness and believed God's word. Even Rahab the harlot will be in the eternal kingdom.

"If any man . . . open the door, I will come in" (Rev. 3:20). Believe that. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). Believe that. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Believe that. If

you believe, it is done. If you do not believe, it is not done.

When you are able to see the invisible, you can do the impossible. "The just shall live by faith." There are no debts to pay, nothing to make right with Him. He has paid the debt. He makes things right by forgiving. Pray, repent, believe. Then believe that He keeps the promise of being with you—with you in the classroom, and you will be diligent; with you in the job, and you will be faithful; with you in the dark, and you will be careful; with you in your associations, and you will be honest; with you in temptation, and you will be victorious; with you in sorrow, and you will be happy; with you in fear, and you will be hopeful; with you in society, and you will be kept.

The Power of His Companionship

If a man walks with God and beholds His presence, talks with Him as a constant companion, basks in the refreshing simplicity of His will, and enjoys the easy victory that His power brings, then he will love Jesus for being so precious; and all the prohibitions of good religion will make sense.

"He is abiding in our hearts by our individual appropriating of faith. We have the companionship of the divine presence, and as we realize this presence, our thoughts are brought into captivity to Jesus Christ."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 388.

"No earthly power or skill or learning can supply the place of God's abiding presence."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 328.

Satan so completely fears and despises Christ, and is so impotent before Him, that he will refuse to keep company with one who stays close to Jesus. Having Christ as a daily companion repels the devil and his host, and when the devil is at bay, the flesh remains quiet. The presence of Jesus becomes a canopy, a fence, a protective shield around the very person of the child of God. A Christian is then secure, and he feels it. He is on God's side and he knows it. God's will is clear, and he sees it. He is at peace, and he enjoys it. He is converted, and he shows it.

"As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 331, 332.

In close daily companionship with Him who is holiest, we become holy; with Him who is love, we become loving. We can be like Jesus through constant communion with Him, and His life becomes ours. We live, not a life like His, but His life. This companionship then broadens, and we are encompassed within the living circle of God's care. Angels become our yokefellows and our guardians, and we are at peace with God and man.

Christ My Coming King

By ROBERT H. PIERSON

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS are a people with a mission," I once read in a West Indies newspaper. This is true. What is it that inspires the sense of urgency throughout the ranks of God's people? Why are the more than 62,000 full-time salaried workers of this church preaching the gospel of the kingdom with crusade fervor in 1,066 languages of earth? Why are 44 Adventist publishing houses publishing periodicals heralding the Advent message in 260 different languages? It is because we are striving toward a definite objective—a goal.

That objective, that goal, is found in the words of the Saviour so well known to every Seventh-day Adventist: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

"The end," the coming of Jesus in the clouds of heaven—ah, this is our objective. This is what we are striving for. The word "end," used by the Saviour, is the Greek word *telos*, which means exactly that—a definite objective, a goal. Seventh-day Adventists are a people of goals, but our greatest objective is *the end*—"that blessed hope" (Titus 2:13), the early advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We long for our precious Saviour and Advocate to become our reigning King.

What will it mean for the end to come—for Christ to assume His rightful place as King of kings and Lord of lords? Why does every true, loyal-hearted Seventh-day Adventist live and pray and work for that great day? What will the return of our Lord mean to the child of God? Why is it "that blessed hope"?

The End of Temptation and Sin

When Christ becomes our King it will mean the end of temptation and sin. How full of sin and the results of sin is this old world of ours! The newspapers, the radio, the TV, are constantly reminding us of the unhappy condition of our sin-sick planet. Individually we are all too well acquainted with the withering blasts of temptation—the awful pressures of sin. At times the lives of some become almost a burden, for discouragement threatens even the most steadfast saint as the evil one presses his relentless attack.



"To such I would say, Do not draw back in despair. We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No; Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 64.

When Jesus appears, when the *end* comes, Satan's power will be forever broken. What a glorious day when the great deceiver will no longer have access to the saints of God! "Affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nahum 1:9).

"They hear with tears of joy and gratitude the Master's commendation. The days of incessant toil, of burden bearing, and of fear and anguish are forgotten as that voice, sweeter than the music of angel harps, pronounces the words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.'"—*Child Guidance*, p. 569.

The End of Fear

When Christ becomes our King it will mean the end of fear. Ours is a world filled with fear. Thousands, perhaps millions, living today in trouble-torn lands live in fear of their lives. Threats and intimidation are almost a way of life in some lands. In all parts of the world there are fear-filled hearts. Some fear to live. Others fear to die. Fear of *want*, fear of *sickness*, fear of *trouble*, disturb the peace and haunt the night watches of millions. As one writer says, "Fear has many and varied disguises. The fear of separation from God is basic. Closely related are the fear of being alone, the fear of reality, the fear of failure, the fear of being left out, the fear of being different, the fear of having time to think, the fear of your own emotions—and a host of other phobias. There is even phobia-phobia, the fear of fear itself. We fear the loss of health, the loss of sanity, the loss of life. We fear our friends, our enemies, and, often most of

all, ourselves!"—MARJORIE LEWIS LLOYD, *This Thing Called Fear*, p. 9.

In African game parks I have noticed that even among animals fear will send a troop of zebra or a herd of wildebeests scurrying across the veld or into the bush for safety. One nervous beast frightened by some unusual sound or movement will frequently stampede the whole herd of fellow browsers or grazers. How much fear there is among man and beast!

Even here and now a tender heavenly Father would speak peace to fearful hearts: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isa. 41:10).

I once saw a motto on the wall of an office. It read, "Fear knocked at the door. Faith opened it and there was no one there." "Be not afraid . . . for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord" (Jer. 1:8).

When Jesus comes and our heavenly Father throws open the gates of Paradise—what a glorious emancipation from fear!

The End of Disappointment and Discouragement

When Christ becomes our King it will mean the end of disappointments and discouragement. You and I—every one of us—know a great deal about these enemies of our peace. "Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 162.

We have all had plans miscarry. Bitter experiences come into every life. We lose property. Our crops fail. We cannot find employment. We are ill. Our hopes are dashed. Everything goes wrong. We feel the way Job felt when he wrote, "My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life. I loathe it; I would not live alway" (Job 7:15, 16).

Elijah was one of the most fearless men in the Bible. At one time he was one of the most discouraged men in all the Bible. He could stand fearlessly before King Ahab, wicked king of Israel, and courageously rebuke him for his sinful reign. But a few hours later Elijah fled before the threats of Ahab's wife.

We find the fugitive prophet in utter discouragement under a juniper tree far out in the wilderness, many miles from his post of duty. Elijah "sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life" (1 Kings 19:4).

When we become discouraged because we become discouraged, let us remember that even the most courageous men in Bible history have had periods of utter discouragement. God delivered them in times of discouragement. He will also deliver us when we lose heart.

What a glorious day when the church of God has full and final deliverance from these ravishers of the soul—when Jesus comes as our King of kings. That glad day will mean the end of disappointment and discouragement.

"In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 474. Truly this is a blessed hope!

The End of Pain and Suffering

When Christ becomes our King there will be an end of pain and suffering. How many hospitals and leper colonies I have visited through the years! How many saints and sinners alike I have seen trembling on the brink! How the sight of fevered faces, twisted limbs, disease-racked bodies, has tugged at my heart-strings! Hospitals everywhere are filled with the sick and suffering.

Ah, brother, sister, if the blight of disease and suffering is your lot, I have blessed news for you this morning—the day of pain and suffering is almost over. When Jesus, our Great Physician, returns for His loved ones, never again will the evil one be able to lay low the saint of God with sickness. "The Lord will take away . . . all sickness" (Deut. 7:15). "For I will restore health" (Jer. 30:17). "Neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. 21:4).

What a day of rejoicing and deliverance for countless tortured bodies when sweet release comes once and for all! There will be no hospitals or clinics, leper colonies or mental institutions, in the glory land. There will be no need of drugs, no antibiotics, no injections, no prescriptions there. There will be release forever when our Great Physician appears as our coming King. The end of pain and suffering will come.

The End of Sorrow and Heartache

When Christ becomes our King there will be no more sorrow and heartache. How often I receive letters from those who have walked through the valley of the shadow of death with a loved one. How many mission families have been broken by cruel, sudden death. Still fresh in my mind is the letter from a young wife and mother who had but recently lost her husband in a tragic accident. "Thanks for your letter of comfort," she wrote. "It is so hard to understand why this should happen—why Carl had to be taken from me while he was so

young and strong. I miss him so much, but now I look forward to the coming of Jesus with greater longing than ever before, when with my little ones I can be with him again."

How many aching hearts, grieving over the loss of loved ones, are praying and longing for the coming of the Life-giver, who will dry their tears and who will restore loved ones to them forever! "There shall be no more . . . sorrow, nor crying" after that glad day, for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. 21:4). "Ye shall be sorrowful," Jesus says, "but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20).

This morning, is your heart aching over the loss of a loved one? Then take courage. "The days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Isa. 60:20).

When God wipes away the tears and heartache it will be for eternity. Our feeble efforts at comforting those who mourn are often ineffective, but when God dries our brimming eyes it will be forever. There will be no more scalding tears and breaking hearts when Jesus comes, for He will banish sorrow and heartache forever on that glorious morn when the end comes and Jesus returns as our coming King!

The End of Death

When Christ becomes our King it will mean the end of man's most implacable enemy—death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed," Paul says, "is death" (1 Cor. 15:26). Only the coming of the great Life-giver will end forever the depredations of man's most relentless foe. We have all stood by the silent side of a loved one whose form has grown cold in death. We know what it is to part with one near and dear to us.

My brother, my sister, if your family circle has recently been broken, if your sad heart is bowed down by bitter grief, this morning I have blessed news for you! Your separation may be but for a moment as it were! The glad reunion day is at hand!

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

"Little children are borne by holy angels to their mother's arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the City of God."—*Child Guidance*, p. 566.

"There shall be no more death," Christ the Revelator and Life-giver assures us (Rev. 21:4).

What a day! What a glorious ending! The flow of tears will be forever stanchied. The hearts of the redeemed will never cease to beat. "At the end of the road there is life forevermore," when Christ the Life-giver becomes Christ the King (Rom. 6:23, Phillips).^{*} What a thrilling ending to the world's sad story of sin and suffering! The love of God for you, for me, for every blood-bought soul makes it so! It is, indeed, a *blessed hope!*

The Goal Achieved

Yes, brother, sister, Seventh-day Adventists are a people with a mission—a grand, glory-filled mission. We have a goal, an objective, toward which we are striving. Our mission, our objective, must be to live a life of consecration—a victorious life—and to preach "this gospel of the kingdom," to share our faith, to hasten the return of our Lord, to bring the end speedily—the end of temptation and sin, the end of fear, the end of disappointment and discouragement, the end of pain and suffering, the end of sorrow and heartbreak, and the end of death. Is this not an objective worthy of our best living, worthy of our best serving?

On this last Sabbath of the Week of Prayer, when another year has almost slipped into eternity, shall we not all—you, I, everyone—in this sanctuary this morning pause and reflect thoughtfully upon our own spiritual needs and God's abundant provision to meet them all in Christ Jesus? Shall we not yield ourselves fully this Sabbath morning in a new and total commitment to a finished work in our lives, in our community, and in all the world in this generation? Shall we not do our part to hasten the day when Christ our precious Saviour and Friend shall become Christ our King?

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News of Note

Alabama-Mississippi Reaches Silver Vanguard Goal

The Alabama-Mississippi Conference is the first conference in North America to report Silver Vanguard victory. Every one of the churches in the conference was "over the top" by October 14, according to W. M. Abbott, Jr., conference lay secretary. The total raised in Alabama-Mississippi is approximately \$476,000.

Tanzania. She will visit her parents in Finland en route. Miss Pelkonen has accepted a call to be matron in the Helsinki Hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Dasenko and two children left Houston, Texas, September 23, returning after a trip to Monte video. Mrs. Dasenko's name is before marriage will continue as first brother Dasenko will continue as first manager of the Uruguay Academy.

Elder and Mrs. W. F. Stott left San Francisco, California, September 23, enroute to India after a trip to Europe. They will be in Europe for several weeks.

church and the world will bring a rich spiritual blessing to all of our readers. We hope you agree.

New SDA Military Chaplains

Two new Seventh-day Adventist military chaplains are now on active duty. Back is attending the chaplain (Lt. L.) his branch of service. Chaplain (Lt. L.) James J. Smith, Jr., is at the Student School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Chaplain (Lt. L.) Gary J. Sprink is at the Student Detachment, U.S. Army Chaplain School, Fort Hamilton, New York. This school will be at the forefront of the Student School, Fort Hamilton, New York. Chaplain (Lt. L.) Gary J. Sprink is at the Student Detachment, U.S. Army Chaplain School, Fort Hamilton, New York. This school will be at the forefront of the Student School, Fort Hamilton, New York.

REVIEW and Herald

"Ye Are the Salt"

By MAYBELLE VANDERMARK
Editor, Review and Herald
For Day (Adventist) Department
Matthew 5:13



Ye are the salt of the earth. If the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be called salt? It is good for nothing but to be cast out and trampled under foot. So shall it be with you, if you do not keep your salt. But if you keep your salt, you will be the salt of the earth. Matthew 5:13

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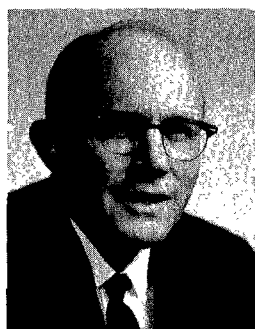
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OCTOBER 7, 1967

Children's Lessons for the Week of Prayer, 1967

By JOE ENGELKEMIER

Introduction

The purpose of the following lessons is to help the children understand more fully how to accept Christ and to live for Him. As you present the lessons, pray earnestly that during this week the young people will make a decision for Christ, giving themselves completely to Him.

It should be kept in mind that many children grow into an experience with Christ. "In working for the conversion of our children, we should not look for violent emotion as the essential evidence of conviction of sin. Nor is it necessary to know the exact time when they are converted. We should teach them to bring their sins to Jesus, asking His forgiveness, and believing that He pardons and receives them as He received the children when He was personally on earth."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 515.

The servant of God suggests, "The lessons that we ourselves learn from Christ we should give to our children, as the young minds can receive them, little by little opening to them the beauty of the principles of heaven."—*Ibid.*

Thus, for many of the children, this week will deepen an experience they already enjoy. For others it will be a beginning commitment. Pray that the Holy Spirit will be working through the week in a special way. Especially claim the promise found in Luke 11:9-13.

Study the lessons well ahead of time. Notice the suggestion that on the fourth day you give each of the students a copy of the New Testament recently published by the American Bible Society. This paperback, entitled *Good News for Modern Man*, can be a means of making the influence of this Week of Prayer a lasting one. These New Testaments can be secured for only 25 cents each. They are printed in today's English, and read like a story. Perhaps you can arrange with the local church to pay for them, or if your group is small you may want to pay for them yourself. A brief note from you on the inside cover would also be appropriate. (Check with the local MV department on where to secure them, or contact the American Bible Society, local or in New York City, your Book and Bible House, or a religious bookstore.)

It would also strengthen your work if you would return periodically to the school or Sabbath school to encourage the children to continue their reading of this New Testament. Even children in the fifth and sixth grades will not find it at all difficult. On these return visits call attention to various interesting stories, especially to those found in the Gospels.

The following lessons have been prepared with children in grades five to ten in mind, and will need some adaptation for younger children. If possible, visit your group ahead

of time. Make it a point to suggest that they bring their own Bible for use, and encourage them to look up the various texts.

For your encouragement, remember this: "It is still true that children are the most susceptible to the teachings of the gospel; their hearts are open to divine influences, and strong to retain the lessons received. The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years. They need to be educated in spiritual things, and parents should give them every advantage, that they may form characters after the similitude of the character of Christ."—*Ibid.*

LESSON 1

Wonderful, Wonderful Jesus

PREPARATION: Read prayerfully the chapter in *The Desire of Ages* entitled "Calvary." Enter into this service "surrounded with the atmosphere of Calvary."

SUGGESTED OPENING SONG: *Singing Youth*, No. 162.

A group of young people, speaking during a special service, were telling what Christ had done for them and what He meant to them. The last person to speak was a young man whom we will call Jim. Jim told how he had been trying to find happiness in parties, rock 'n' roll music, and worldly pleasures. All of these things had left him more unhappy than ever. "I discovered that these things just don't last," he said.

Then Jim had gone to a youth camp over New Year's weekend. On Friday evening he had heard other young people give testimonies about Christ, telling how wonderful it is to know and love Him. Jim decided to accept Jesus as his Saviour. This brought a joy he had never known before. His heart was so filled with a desire to tell others about the wonderful Friend he had found, that it was not long before Jim decided to become a minister.

After Jim had finished speaking, those in the audience were invited to come forward and dedicate their lives to Christ. Soon the aisles were filled with young people, some of them giving their hearts to Christ for the first time.

"You are giving yourself, not to a lot of rules, but to a wonderful, wonderful Saviour," a Bible teacher told them as they came forward.

"A wonderful, wonderful Saviour."

During this week we want you to become better acquainted with this wonderful, wonderful Saviour.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins," the angel Gabriel told Joseph.

"Jesus"—wonderful, wonderful name. Say it softly, reverently. As you do, the angels of heaven draw near. They are in this room right now, to make your heart soft and tender as you think about Him and as you pray to Him.

You have probably heard about Jesus all your life. There are many things which all of you know about Him.

You know, for example, where He was born—in a manger in the little village of Bethlehem.

You know where He lived and taught—in a tiny country which is only about 50 miles wide and 150 miles long.

You know how He died—on a cross, between two thieves.

You know about His resurrection—that an angel rolled away the stone which sealed His tomb, and He came forth, the conqueror of death.

You know about His second coming—that very soon He is coming back to this rebellious world to destroy sin and to take His sons and daughters up through space to the city of God.

These are some of the things which you know about Him. But do you also know Him? Do you know Him as your Saviour from sin? Is He real to you? Can you talk to Him any time, even as you walk to school or as you are working?

During this week we are going to talk about why we need a Saviour, how to become a Christian, how we can become better acquainted with Jesus, and how we can serve Him better.

But, first, let's think about His love for us.

Each of you has been asked to bring your Bible with you for these meetings. Let's turn in our Bibles to Romans 5:6-8, and read together. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Listen carefully while I read verse 8 from Phillips' translation: "The proof of God's amazing love is this: that it was while we were sinners that Christ died for us."*

"Christ died for us"—this is the proof of His amazing love. Let's use our imagination, and turning time back more than 19 centu-

* From *The New Testament in Modern English*, © J. B. Phillips 1958. Used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

ries, let's pretend that we are watching something that is happening on a hill just outside of Jerusalem. To make some of the stories that we are going to talk about this week seem more real, we are sometimes going to ask these questions: What is there to see? What is there to hear? What is there to feel?

In our imagination we join the crowd standing around a Man who is being nailed to a cross. What is there to see and to hear as this happens?

We see the rough soldiers holding down this Man's arms and legs. We see a hammer and nails being brought. We see the spike being placed against one of His hands, and then we hear the thud of the hammer as the nail is driven through the tender flesh and into the wood. We see the same thing done to the other hand, and then to His feet.

Then, as tears fill our eyes, we hear Jesus praying for the cruel men who were driving the nails. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," He prays.

We then see strong, husky soldiers lift the cross and drop it into the place prepared for it. We hear the mocking remarks of the enemies of Christ, as they ridicule Him. Standing there helplessly, we watch Him suffer and die.

As He hangs there on the cross, what is there to see? The drops of sweat and blood on His face, and the red, ugly wounds on His back and arms, from the awful lashing which had been cruelly given Him back at Pilate's palace.

What is there to hear? The chatter of the mob, their rude remarks, the quiet sobbing of His friends, and the sharp commands of the guards as they tell some children to keep out of their way.

What is there to feel? Try to feel, in your imagination, the pain—the pain from the crown of thorns, the pain from the spikes through His hands and feet, the pain of the cramps that must have developed in His arms and legs, and the torture of thirst as He hangs there helpless. But even worse was the heartbreaking burden of our sins, which caused Him so great an anguish that His physical pain was hardly felt.

Are you there, in your imagination, watching, and listening, and feeling? Stay a little longer, and pay close attention while I read a paragraph from that wonderful book *The Desire of Ages* that tells why He so willingly suffered the pain of the cross:

"The spotless Son of God hung upon the cross, His flesh lacerated with stripes; those hands so often reached out in blessing, nailed to the wooden bars; those feet so tireless on ministries of love, spiked to the tree; that royal head pierced by the crown of thorns; those quivering lips shaped to the cry of woe. And all that He endured—the blood drops that flowed from His head, His hands, His feet, the agony that racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father's face—speaks to each child of humanity, declaring, It is for thee that the Son of God consents to bear this burden of guilt; for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise. He who stilled the angry waves and walked the foam-capped billows, who made devils tremble and disease flee, who opened blind eyes and called forth the dead to life,—offers Himself upon the cross as a sacrifice, and this from love to thee."—Page 755.

Think again of Paul's words in the book of Romans: "Christ died for us." He died for

you. He died for me. Because He loves us so very, very much, He died for us. The very least we can do in return is to give our hearts to Him.

During the Civil War a soldier in the Union Army, William Scott, fell asleep when on duty at Key Bridge. He was tried by court-martial and sentenced to death. His mother went to President Lincoln and pleaded for her boy's life. Finally Lincoln said, "All right, I will let him go." He then went to the guardhouse. The young soldier recognized the President, and saluting, stood before him as he asked in a tone of sympathy:

"William, did you fall asleep? Do you know what might have happened if the enemy had marched over and killed hundreds of our boys? Did you get a fair trial? Do you deserve to die?"

The heart of the young soldier was touched by the words of the President, and with tears running down his cheeks he said, "Yes, Mr. President, I am guilty and deserve to die."

The heart of the President was moved with still deeper sympathy, and he said, "William, I am going to let you go; but, remember, your life belongs to me."

William went back to his company, and later, at the Battle of Gettysburg, he fell to the ground, mortally wounded by enemy fire. As a comrade bent over him, he said, "John, there is nothing you can do. I will be dead in a minute." He then reached into his uniform, pulled out some trinkets, and said, "Give these to my mother. Tell her how I died."

William then drew a deep breath, and continued, "John, listen! When this war is over, they are going to take you soldiers and march you through Washington in the victory march. I want you, if you get a chance, to fall out of the ranks, go to the White House, look up Abraham Lincoln, and tell him that William Scott gave him back his life on the Gettysburg battlefield."

This morning Jesus Christ is saying, through the Holy Spirit, "Jim, Mary, your life belongs to Me. I have made provision for you to be freed from the penalty of death, and remember, your life belongs to Me."

Today Jesus is not asking us to die for Him, but rather, to live for Him. Turn in your Bibles to Romans 12:1, and read with me: "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."

As we stand for a few moments of silent prayer, won't you thank Jesus for dying for you, and then give to Him the life which belongs to Him because of the sacrifice He made on Calvary?

LESSON 2

Ye Must Be Born Again

PREPARATION: Read the chapter in *The Desire of Ages* entitled "Nicodemus." Also read the chapter titled "Midnight Visitor" in volume 7 of A. S. Maxwell's *The Bible Story*. Try to visualize the scenes portrayed.

SUGGESTED OPENING SONG: *Youth Sings*, No. 109 ("Things Are Different Now").

In imagination let's go again to Jerusalem, this time at night. Overhead the stars are shining, and the Milky Way stretches from horizon to horizon in sparkling splendor. Only the occasional barking of a dog breaks the stillness of the night.

As we stand there in the dark, out of sight, we see an important-looking man coming down the street. His priestly robes are drawn closely about him, and he keeps to the shadows as he walks quickly by. Curious, we decide to follow him.

Nicodemus, the man whom we are following, had been watching Jesus for some time. He very much wanted to talk to Jesus, but shrank from seeking Him openly. Should his friends in the Sanhedrin learn that he had gone to see Jesus, they would scorn and ridicule him. He had decided upon a secret interview, and learning by special inquiry the place on the Mount of Olives where Jesus would be spending the night, Nicodemus waited until the city was hushed in slumber, and then sought Him.

Leaving the city, he walks rapidly up the Mount of Olives, and soon arrives at the place where Jesus is staying. Emerging from the shadows, he approaches Christ.

Listening, you hear him greet Jesus. In the conversation which follows, the Saviour comes right to the point. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3), Jesus said.

Nicodemus knew what Jesus meant. He knew that Jesus was telling him that he needed a new heart, and he didn't like it.

You see, Nicodemus was an important leader. He performed many good deeds. He gave large offerings to the Temple. He was looked up to by many people. Yet this youthful Teacher was telling him that he needed a new heart, that he must be born again.

Irritated, Nicodemus tried to start an argument. "How can a man be born when he is old?" he asked. "Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

Jesus refused to argue. Instead, He emphasized what He had said by repeating it. "Ye must be born again," Jesus said.

As we stand there listening, we feel a breeze blowing through our hair, and we can hear it rustling the leaves. Then we hear Jesus say, "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8, R.S.V.).

Nicodemus listens to the wind for a few moments, and then asks, "How can these things be?"

In His reply Jesus said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Then Jesus spoke those words which have become so precious to all of us, as found in John 3:16. Let's repeat them together: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Nicodemus didn't accept Jesus as his Saviour that night, but he hid the words in his heart. He returned home, and for three years continued to watch Jesus. In the Sanhedrin, when the Pharisees wanted to destroy

Christ, Nicodemus would oppose their plans, but he wouldn't come out and accept Christ.

Then, on that terrible Friday when Jesus was crucified, Nicodemus was present. As he looked up at Jesus hanging upon the cross, he remembered what Jesus had said that night three years before. What words do you suppose he especially remembered? That's right. He thought again of how Christ had said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Nicodemus saw Jesus "lifted up." He saw the cross outlined against the sky. And as he watched, he made a decision. From now on he would come out boldly for Christ. Courageously he went to Pilate, and got permission to take the body of Christ down from the cross and give Him an honorable burial. His friend Joseph of Arimathea joined him, and these two men, along with the disciple John, took the bruised body of Christ down from the cross.

In our imagination, let's watch them. What is there to see? Listen carefully as I read from *The Desire of Ages* a paragraph that describes what you would have seen:

"Gently and reverently they removed with their own hands the body of Jesus from the cross. Their tears of sympathy fell fast as they looked upon His bruised and lacerated form. Joseph owned a new tomb, hewn in a rock. This he was reserving for himself; but it was near Calvary, and he now prepared it for Jesus. The body, together with the spices brought by Nicodemus, was carefully wrapped in a linen sheet, and the Redeemer was borne to the tomb. There the three disciples straightened the mangled limbs, and folded the bruised hands upon the pulseless breast."—Page 774.

A heavy stone was rolled against the entrance of the tomb, and as the evening shadows fell, quietly, thoughtfully, Nicodemus went to his home. He was a changed man. No longer did he care what other people would say if he accepted Christ. No longer did he have inflated ideas of his own importance. He was a changed man.

What changed him? What gave him a new heart?

The Holy Spirit had been working upon his heart. Little by little, Nicodemus had been drawn closer to a surrender to Christ. Then, on that Friday as he watched Jesus hanging upon the cross, his old heart was completely broken, and God gave him a new heart.

Jesus said one time, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). Nicodemus saw Christ dying for his sins, and he felt drawn to such a wonderful Friend, and finally made a decision to accept Jesus as his Saviour. He was born again—he was given a new heart.

Here we need to explain something. What does the Bible mean when it speaks of a new heart?

"When Jesus speaks of the new heart, He means the mind, the life, the whole being. . . . To have a new heart is to have a new mind, new purposes, new motives. What is the sign of a new heart?—A changed life."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 72.

Turn in your Bibles to Romans 3:23. Here we read that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Then we turn to Jeremiah 17:9, and read that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

David discovered that this deceitful, selfish heart can get one into a lot of trouble. It caused him to do things that hurt others and that hurt God. In Psalm 51 you can read a prayer David wrote after he had sinned terribly. Notice verse 10, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

There are a lot of juniors and teen-agers who need to pray that same prayer. They need a new heart. The heart which they were born with is selfish. It may be stubborn. It may love sinful things. It may cause one to cheat, and lie, and steal. It may cause one to be disrespectful to his parents.

One morning just as I was arriving at school, a girl shouted something ugly to her mother. I didn't hear much of what she said, but it was apparent that she was being very disrespectful.

That girl, I thought to myself, needs a new heart—a heart that is loving and kind instead of rude and disrespectful.

One time a chemistry teacher gave some boys a small piece of gold, and asked them to try to dissolve it. They tried various acids, and even left the gold all night in the strongest acid they could find. But it wouldn't dissolve.

The teacher then told them, "I knew that you couldn't dissolve that gold, for none of the acids you have will attack it." Then, handing them a bottle labeled nitrohydrochloric acid, he said, "Now try this." They poured the contents of the bottle into the test tube, and the gold was dissolved almost instantly.

The next day in class the professor asked, "Do you know why this nitrohydrochloric acid is called *aqua regia*, or royal water?"

"Yes," replied a student, "because it can master gold, which resists everything else that is poured upon it."

Then the teacher told the boys that there was something much harder to change than gold. "The hardest of all substances," he said, "is the sinful human heart." He then pointed out that education, culture, honor, punishment, or trials cannot change it, and that the only thing that has power over the human heart is the blood of Christ, the true *aqua regia* for the soul.

In that wonderful little book *Steps to Christ* we read something which indicates that this teacher was right. The author says: "Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men [or boys and girls] can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 18.

Perhaps there are some of you who know that your heart needs to be changed. Possibly you have never given your heart to Christ at all. Or perhaps you have given your heart to Him, but because you have not been trusting Him fully, you have fallen back into some bad habits, and today you would like to give yourself completely to Christ so His grace can change your heart.

Here is a wonderful little prayer I would like to teach you. Listen carefully as I read it through, and then, a sentence at a time, let's learn it. Here is how it goes:

"Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Lord, take my heart; for I can-

not give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 159.

[Have the children or young people repeat the prayer with you, a line at a time, enlarging upon the thought of each sentence as necessary, depending upon their ages. The idea is not that they learn a rote prayer, but that they catch the meaning of the total prayer. Then close with a prayer of your own, using some of the thoughts of the above prayer. It would be appropriate to sing again the chorus, "Things Are Different Now."]

LESSON 3

How to Become a Christian

PREPARATION: Read Acts 16:19-34 and the story entitled "The Wound Washer" in A. S. Maxwell's *The Bible Story*, vol. 10.

SUGGESTED OPENING SONG: *Singing Youth*, No. 133 or 135.

What is the most important question in all the world for any boy or girl to ask?

Let's turn in our Bibles to the book of Acts, and read verses 25-30 of chapter 16. As we read together, please look for this important question. (Read aloud Acts 16:25-30.)

To make this story more real, let's try to picture what happened. What is there to see and to hear?

It is midnight, and most people are asleep, but down at the local jail two of the prisoners are singing. Their clothes are torn, and their backs are bloody from a cruel beating, and their feet are fastened in stocks, making the men even more uncomfortable—but they are singing.

Suddenly, perhaps right in the middle of a stanza of one of their songs, there is a loud rumble. It is a great earthquake, and the foundations of the prison are shaking. The prison doors are wrenched open, and rocks and timbers fall to the floor.

Awakening from sleep, the jailer rushes out to see what is going on. Stumbling over the fallen debris, he plunges into the dungeon. He finds the doors all open.

Thinking that the prisoners have escaped, and knowing that he will be blamed for it, he draws his sword, thinking to kill himself. Probably he hesitates just a moment, for even in his fear and anxiety he must realize what an awful step he is about to take. Suddenly, out of the darkness, he hears a loud voice saying, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here."

"Bring me a light!" yells the jailer. "Bring me a light."

From somewhere a servant comes running with a light. The jailer, trembling, falls down before Paul and Silas.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" he asks.

There's that all-important question—What must I do to be saved?

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and

thou shalt be saved," Paul and Silas tell him. Then, going to the jailer's house, they "spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:31, 32).

The jailer washes the wounds of the two prisoners as he talks with them, and before the night is over he and all his family are baptized. After this he invites Paul and Silas to have breakfast with him.

It's a thrilling story. But let's think about that important question, What must I do to be saved?

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is the instruction Paul gave to the jailer. You must believe that Jesus loves you, and that He died for you.

But is it enough just to believe that He loves you? Don't you have to respond to that love?

In our story it says that Paul and Silas, as they visited with the jailer, "spoke unto him the word of the Lord." We don't know all they talked about, but we can imagine that they must have told him about repentance, and faith, and baptism, and the need to study the Scriptures and to pray, so that he would grow stronger each day.

And that, in very simple steps, is how one is saved.

First, as you study and talk and think about Jesus, the Holy Spirit awakens in you a sorrow for your sins. You *repent* of those sins.

What is repentance? A small girl once defined repentance as being sorry enough to quit. But the definition of repentance I like best is one given by a soldier, who said, "The Lord said to me, 'Halt! About-face! Forward march!' I obeyed His commands and that was all there was to it."

Repentance is more than being sorry. Did you ever raid the cookie jar, and get caught in the midst of that little act of mischief? If you have, you were probably very sorry, because you knew you would be punished. Very likely you were not sorry that you had disobeyed, but just that you were caught and were going to be punished.

This is what was wrong with the sorrow of some of the people the Bible tells about. Their repentance was not genuine. They were sorry only because of the punishment. Can you think of any such Bible characters? (Esau, Balaam, Pharaoh, and Judas.)

What is it that leads one to genuine repentance?

Only the Holy Spirit can make us want to repent. But there is one thing we can do that enables the Holy Spirit to impress our hearts. We can think about Jesus and His sufferings upon the cross. "By every sin Jesus is wounded afresh; and as we look upon Him whom we have pierced, we mourn for the sins that have brought anguish upon Him."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 300.

Yesterday we mentioned Psalm 51, which was written by David as a prayer of repentance. As you read that psalm, you see that David's repentance was genuine. He did not make excuses. He did not try to minimize the terrible nature of his sin. He did not try to escape the threatened punishment. He hated his sin. He hated the fact that he had hurt others and had hurt God. "It was not for pardon only that he prayed, but for purity of heart."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 25. (If the children are old enough, suggest that they read the chapter in *Steps to Christ* entitled "Repentance.")

The second step is faith. We must believe that Jesus really does forgive our sins when

we do all we can to make them right and ask His forgiveness. Turn in your Bibles to 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This is such a wonderful promise that we want to stop a minute and underline it, so that you can find it easily.

Jesus promises "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Think of that word "cleanse" for a minute. When you have gotten dirty and sweaty, you know how good you feel after you have taken a shower. The clean feeling is so refreshing, isn't it?

It is even more wonderful to be cleansed from your sins. It's no fun to have a guilty conscience. It's no fun to be burdened with sin. Let's take our sins to Jesus. Let's kneel by our beds every evening, and confess our sins and mistakes to Jesus, and then go to sleep with that clean feeling. We don't even need to wait until evening. If you do something on the playground or in the classroom or anywhere else that your conscience tells you is wrong, stop and ask Jesus to forgive you and to help you not to do it again. Keep that clean feeling.

True faith will lead us to make right anything that has hurt someone else, or anything that has taken unfair advantage of someone else. Let's turn to Ezekiel 33:15 and see what God says about making things right. (Read this text aloud, emphasizing with your voice the first part of the verse.)

Notice that the wicked must "restore the pledge," and "give again that he had robbed."

Suppose that someone, while at the dime store, yields to temptation and takes something he very much wants. Before he can be forgiven, what must he do? You are right—he must go back to the store and pay for it. Or perhaps he could write a letter, enclosing the payment. He may want to counsel with his teacher or a pastor or mom or dad first, and get some help. But he must "give again that he had robbed."

This is hard. But not making it right will be a lot harder. Solomon has something to say about this, in Proverbs 13:15, last part: "The way of transgressors is hard," he wrote. A sin that is not made right is like a splinter under the skin that is not removed. It festers and poisons.

True faith will also lead us to make a surrender to Christ that is wholehearted. It will lead us to give Him all of our heart, not just part of it. It will cause us to want to live for Him all the time, not just during a Week of Prayer. Turn to Jeremiah 29:13, and see what God says about this: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with *all* your heart."

That is reasonable, isn't it? Suppose that two people fall in love, and decide to get married and go through life together. But suppose the fellow tells the girl, "I love you with all—well, almost all—of my heart. You have 98 per cent of my heart, but I'm saving two per cent of it for another girl whom I am still dating." Would any girl be happy with an intended bridegroom who told her such a thing?

Doesn't God have just as much right to expect His children to love Him with *all* their heart?

The third step in the plan of salvation is baptism. Let's turn to Acts 22:16. Here we read, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."

Baptism tells our friends and all the world

that we belong to Christ. You should not rush into it too soon, for it is a very important service. Be sure the plan of salvation is clear to you, and that you understand the meaning of repentance and forgiveness.

The plan of salvation involves a daily growing up into Christ. In the physical world, life and growth require air, nourishment, and exercise. In the spiritual world, too, we need to breathe, we must have nourishment, and we need exercise.

What, in the Christian's life, is said to be "the breath of the soul"? That's right—prayer. And what would be the Christian's spiritual food? The answer, of course, is the Word of God. And what about exercise? Of course—your exercise comes from working for others, helping others, sharing your faith.

We will discuss tomorrow how to be a strong and dependable Christian. Before we close, are there any questions about what we have talked about today? Is repentance clear to you? Do you understand what faith involves? Are there any questions about baptism?

Remember the prayer we learned yesterday? As we pray silently, make the thought of that prayer part of your prayer. Let's bow our heads.

LESSON 4

Strong and Dependable

PREPARATION: Read "The Golden Idol" and "Thrown to the Flames" in volume 6 of A. S. Maxwell's *The Bible Story*. See "Seven and Seven—Toward the Kingdom" in the April 18, 1967, issue of *The Youth's Instructor* for more information on prayer ideas. Most important of all, have copies of the English paperback New Testament entitled *Good News for Modern Man*. These may be secured through the American Bible Society for 25 cents each. Give a copy to each student, so that he can apply the suggestions you will make in this talk.

SUGGESTED OPENING SONG: *Singing Youth*, No. 64.

Yesterday we said that in order for anyone to have life and strength, he must breathe, he must have nourishment, and he must get exercise. Let's take a quick review of these three essentials. What is the breath of the soul? What is the Christian's nourishment? How does he get exercise? (Take a minute to review these three points from yesterday's talk.)

Let's talk about the joy of prayer first. If you have an opportunity, read the short chapter in *Messages to Young People* entitled "The Power of Prayer." It is only two pages long, but it suggests many wonderful thoughts about prayer. One of those thoughts is this: "Prayer is the breath of the soul."

That makes prayer important, doesn't it? To remind ourselves how necessary breathing is for physical life, let's have everyone stop breathing—by holding your breath—as long as you comfortably can. (Take a couple of minutes here, perhaps enlarging upon this

point, and maybe timing those who participate.)

Now the important lesson is this: Are you alive spiritually if you never pray? Perhaps we could compare the supposed Christian who never prays at all to an artificial flower. From a distance an artificial flower may look as good as a real one. But examine it more closely, and you discover that it is not alive.

Our little experiment a few moments ago should convince us of another thing too. Breathing is not a distasteful duty—it's a pleasure. Did you notice how wonderful that first breath of air was after you had been holding your breath for a while?

Prayer should not be looked upon as a duty either—it's a joy and a blessing. "Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend." This Friend is the best friend you could possibly find. You can talk to Him about anything—about things you wouldn't share with even your closest earthly friend. You can share with Him your joys, your sorrows, your secret fears and hopes. You can talk to Him about your math problems, your vacation, your clothes, your family, your friends, your secret temptations, or anything. Remember this: You can "take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to hear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice."

Learn to talk to Jesus as you go about your studies and activities. You do not always need to be on your knees in order to pray. Here's another wonderful thought from that chapter on prayer which we mentioned: "While engaged in our daily work, we should lift the soul to heaven in prayer. These silent petitions rise like incense before the throne of grace; and the enemy is baffled. The Christian whose heart is thus stayed upon God cannot be overcome."—*Messages to: Young People*, p. 249.

This is the way Enoch walked with God, and God became a very real Friend to Enoch. He can become just as real a Friend to you.

We might call this kind of prayer a thought prayer, for it is not spoken out loud. But it is heard. "It rises above the din of the street, above the noise of machinery. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard."—*Ibid.*, p. 250.

One girl who learned to pray this way said to a teacher not long ago, "I feel like Jesus is with me all the time, and I can talk to Him just like I am talking to you. I can pray as I am walking into class, or any time, and ask for His blessing."

The Bible also encourages us to pray with one another. Turn to Matthew 18:19, 20, and read with me: "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Do you enjoy prayer bands? Prayer bands can be conducted in such a way that you really look forward to them. Let me tell you about how some schools have been conducting voluntary prayer bands. (The next two paragraphs will need to be modified according to the size of your group and the available facilities. Take the idea and put it into your own words, fitting your plans according to your own situation.)

In one school where a chapel is available,

a bell for voluntary prayer bands rings ten minutes before lunch. Students who desire to attend are excused from classes and go to the chapel, where a student is playing either a piano or an organ as people come in. A promise of Scripture is read first. (It is even more effective if a printed text on a small card, such as you find in Scripture promise boxes, can be handed to each student at the door as he comes in. In one school the printing class provides these, and the promises are then kept by the students in a small plastic folder upon which has been imprinted "Prayer time gems.")

After this Scripture gem, there is opportunity for special requests. Then unspoken requests are indicated by the raising of your hand. Students then separate into prayer groups of two or three, throughout the chapel. Each person prays for every other person in his group, as well as for the special requests. Upon finishing, each group remains kneeling with eyes closed until complete silence indicates that everyone is through. With heads still bowed all sing the chorus "Jesus Is Real to Me."

Then, before separating, all clasp hands in a circle, and sing a chorus or some other song for the closing of prayer bands. This singing makes prayer bands so much more meaningful, and when you clasp hands in a circle and sing a favorite, such as "Christ for Me," it draws you closer to God and to one another. The whole service takes less than ten minutes, and in some schools a lot of students enjoy having prayer bands like this every day. (Once a week would be a blessing too. The important thing is that they be kept short and interesting, giving the Holy Spirit opportunity to make Christ real to the young people. Encourage the youngsters to bring specific requests—nothing will increase interest in prayer bands like answered prayers.)

If you want to be strong, you must also eat. Suppose that at breakfast this morning you sat down and just looked at your food, but didn't eat it. How much good would it do you? Suppose you did the same thing at lunch and dinner, and kept this up day after day. What would happen?

What about the Christian who has all kinds of spiritual food around, but never actually eats or assimilates any of it? He is going to become a weakling, isn't he?

Turn with me to Matthew 4:4, and let's read the last part of the verse together: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Now let's look at Jeremiah 15:16: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

A blind man who often read his Bible lost his hands in an accident. Since it was impossible for him to read his Braille Bible without hands and fingers, he learned to read by using his tongue. He read so often that his tongue would almost bleed. The Bible brought him so much joy that he read through both the Old and New Testaments several times.

How about us? Do we really enjoy this good Book? When we enjoy it, we will read it. Perhaps what we need are some suggestions which will help us enjoy it more.

I have here a copy of a new translation of the New Testament called *Good News for Modern Man*. It is in today's English, and it is like reading a story. I want to give a copy

to each one of you. (Have appointed ones distribute the copies.)

This is a paperback put out by the American Bible Society. You may want extra copies to give to some of your friends or you may want to keep one copy at school and another by your bed. A copy costs only 25 cents. Let's quickly scan through the book of Matthew. Notice how the headings in dark print divide it into stories. There are even some drawings to add interest. I think you will really enjoy reading this, and I would like to suggest that you keep the copy I have given you in your room, and read some each evening before you go to bed.

Remember the questions we suggested in our first talk before we described the death of Christ? What were they? That's right—we ask, What is there to see? What is there to hear? What is there to feel? Let's apply these three questions to an Old Testament story you already know well, and see if it doesn't make it sparkle. Let's try to picture the story of the three young men in the fiery furnace, by asking these three questions.

What is there to see and to hear?

A statue higher than most flagpoles, the color of polished gold, standing out on the plain of Dura, towering up against the blue sky. Tens of thousands of people arriving for the dedication, some streaming out onto the plain as early as dawn, bringing lunches, wanting a good place to see everything that will happen.

Then, see the furnace, blazing furiously, its smoke "curling ominously up through the still morning air into the blue sky."

Hear the royal musicians as they begin to play, the "wind instruments and stringed instruments and percussion instruments of all kinds joined together in what was perhaps the national anthem of New Babylon."—RAYMOND F. COTTRELL, *Beyond Tomorrow*, p. 66.

See the tens of thousands of bowed forms, as they—but wait, look! There are three young men who are not bowing. See them standing erect, in a conscious dignity which gives no evidence of being ill at ease. See the soldiers hustling them through the crowd. Hear the calm words of the three young men, and the angry words of the king. See the king get so furious that he can hardly control his rage—see his face becoming livid with anger.

Hear the roar of the furnace as it is heated seven times hotter. See the three youth bound hand and foot, then dragged to the door of the furnace, and hurled in. See the soldiers who hurled them in slumping down, dying from the intense heat. See the face of King Nebuchadnezzar turning pale as he sees not three, but four men, walking calmly about through the flames. Hear his excited shout, as he bids the men to come forth. See the young heroes walking from the flames, and then quietly leaving the scene and returning to the city.

And what is there to feel?

Feel the pride of the Babylonian crowds, as they admire the splendid statue. Feel the calm faith of the young men as they tell the king, "Our God whom we serve is able." Feel the heat of the furnace, as it belches forth its flames. Feel the presence of Jesus in the furnace, as He talks quietly with the young men, commending them for their courage and loyalty. Feel the astonishment that sweeps over the crowd, as, forgetting the statue, they strain to get a glimpse of the three heroes.

Don't ever believe that the Bible is a dull

book. The most exciting stories ever to happen are there, if you will take time to read and think about them.

Tomorrow we will talk about the importance of exercise for those who want to be strong and dependable Christians.

LESSON 5

Sharing Your Joy

PREPARATION: Read in *The Desire of Ages*, pages 337-341, the story of the healing of the demoniacs. See also "Lunatics Made Sane," volume 7 of *The Bible Story*.

SUGGESTED OPENING SONG: *Singing Youth*, No. 3.

The person who wants to be strong and healthy must exercise. Your muscles were made to be used. An active muscle has twenty or more times the amount of blood passing through it than an inactive muscle. Exercise sends life-giving oxygen to the cells, makes your muscles firm and strong, strengthens the heart, and gives you a sense of well-being. The person who shuns exercise is more likely to become discouraged and depressed than is the person who is physically active.

Your body was made for action!

And so it is with your Christian experience—your joy in Christ. Your faith was made to be shared. If you don't, it will sicken and eventually die.

This sentence from *Steps to Christ* gives boys and girls a lot to think about: "No sooner does one come to Christ, than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus."—Page 78.

Let me tell you a wonderful story about two men whose lives illustrate this truth.

Just as the sun was rising over the Sea of Galilee a small group of men were stepping out of their boats onto the sandy beach on the eastern shore of the lake. The night had been terribly stormy, but the morning was calm and beautiful.

The quietness of the morning is suddenly broken by wild screams from a nearby cemetery. Startled, the disciples turn and look in that direction. They see two madmen lunge out of the cemetery and rush toward them. With broken chains hanging from their wrists, and hate-filled eyes glaring out through their long, matted hair, they are enough to frighten anyone.

The disciples turn and race up the beach. They do not go far, however, before they notice that Jesus is not with them. Pausing to look back, they see Jesus calmly standing there, His hand raised. The two madmen, gnashing their teeth and foaming at the mouth, have been halted by Christ's upraised hand. They rage furiously but helplessly before Him.

Speaking with authority, Jesus bids the demons that have tormented the two men to depart. The demons enter into a herd of swine feeding nearby. The pigs panic, and rush madly down the cliff into the lake, where they drown.

Meanwhile, the men are marvelously changed. Their eyes sparkle. Their blood-

stained hands are calm and still, and with glad voices they praise God.

The swine keepers hasten away to tell their employers, and anyone else they meet, about what has happened. A huge crowd rushes out to meet Jesus. The two demon-possessed men had been the terror of the whole countryside. No one would have dared pass by the cemetery. But now these two men are sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to His words.

Angry at the loss of the swine, the people urged Jesus to depart. As Christ was about to enter the boat, the two men begged to go with Him. But Jesus refused. "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee," the Saviour said.

The two men enthusiastically did as Jesus commanded. They had never heard a single sermon, but they could tell what Jesus had done for them. They went everywhere throughout the whole region telling people what a wonderful friend they had found in Jesus.

The people listened. What these two men said touched their hearts. And when Jesus returned to that region nine or ten months later, thousands of people flocked out to hear Him.

As these two men told others about Christ, they discovered the joy of witnessing. They discovered that telling other people about the Saviour made their own lives even happier.

"I will bless thee, . . . and thou shalt be a blessing," God told Abraham. This is His message to you today. God needs you, and He will bless you, and He will make you a blessing. This morning we would like to suggest four ways in which you can be a blessing to others.

First, you can be a blessing just by doing what is right. The religion of Christ is not mere talk. It is a way of life.

Sometimes you will see people doing things they shouldn't. You may even see grownups in the church sometimes not living the way they know they should. When you do, God has a special message to help you, found in 1 Timothy 4:12. It is this: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers."

When you may be tempted by young friends to do wrong, here is another message from God for you to remember, from Proverbs 1:10: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." And from Exodus 23:2:

Are You Ready?

By M. I. F. MABERLY

Are you ready, are you waiting,
For that grand, yet awful day
When the King shall come in glory,
His saints to take away?

Are you ready, are you waiting,
Shall you hear the Saviour say,
"Come, ye blessed of My Father,
Enter in with Me and stay?"

Yes, I'm ready, and I'm waiting,
Lo, I'm standing at the door
To go home with my Jesus,
To live forevermore.

"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."

By doing what is right you can have much influence upon other young people. Listen to this, from *Messages to Young People*: "The youth, if right, could sway a mighty influence. Preachers, or laymen advanced in years, cannot have one-half the influence upon the young that the youth, devoted to God, can have upon their associates."—Page 204.

Think of that! Your life can be "a mighty influence." God appreciates, so much, every young person who seeks to live by right principles. *Messages to Young People* also states: "One earnest, conscientious, faithful young man [or boy or girl] in a school is an inestimable treasure."—*Ibid.*, p. 181. "Such ones will exert an influence over their fellow students which will tell upon the entire school."—*Ibid.*

The second way you can be a blessing is by being obedient and helpful to your parents. Children and youth who love the Lord Jesus "will not be impatient if reproved; but will make glad the heart of father and mother by their kindness, their patience, their willingness to do all they can in helping to bear the burdens of daily life" (*ibid.*, p. 333).

There are so many duties around the home where children can help. Let me suggest a "magic question" you should ask often: "What can I do next to be of help?" Do your regularly assigned duties without being told, and then ask what you can do next to help. Try it! You will be amazed how much gladness it will bring to the heart of mother and dad—and to you too!

Can your parents count on your always being obedient? Willing obedience is the best way in the world to say "I love you" to them.

Down in the woods of Southern United States there was a big forest fire. A turpentine worker had told his faithful dog to watch his dinner pail. When the fire roared through the woods the dog died because he would not desert his master's dinner pail. With tears running down his face, the dog's master said, "I always had to be careful what I told that dog to do, 'cause I knew he'd do it." I wonder—can your parents say as much of you?

Let me suggest something else. When you get home tonight, give your mother a big hug, and tell her that you love her. Then do all you can to show your love by helpfulness and obedience, and you will be a wonderful blessing in your home.

Third, you can be a blessing by telling others about Christ. You can do it by giving an attractive piece of literature to the milkman, the postman, and to the neighbors up the street. You can share your faith by helping with Ingathering when it starts in a few weeks. You can keep literature in your car, and give a magazine or a small book to service station attendants when you travel. You can invite people to listen to the Voice of Prophecy and to watch Faith for Today. You may have opportunity to enroll someone in a Bible course. You can faithfully give your offerings each week.

Sometimes you may also have opportunity to tell another person your own age about Christ. This is not as difficult as it sounds, if you will just do what the two men did in the story we told at the beginning of today's talk. We can tell them what Jesus has done for us. Concerning this Mrs. White suggests: "As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt. If we have been following

Jesus step by step, we shall have something right to the point to tell concerning the way in which He has led us."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 340.

Finally, we can be a blessing by praying. All around the world children and youth have been joining what they call the "Seven and Seven Club." At seven o'clock each morning and at seven o'clock in the evening members pause in what they are doing to pray that God will bless other young people around the world. It doesn't always have to be exactly at seven o'clock, but make it as close to seven as you can.

God is soon going to finish His work by a wonderful outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In Joel 2, where it tells about this, children are mentioned, and young people are mentioned. They are seeking the Lord, and praying that God will use them. And God will use you.

In your "seven and seven" prayers, be specific. Pray for two things. Pray that God will pour out His Spirit so the work can be finished. And pray that God will bless the thousands of Christian schools scattered around the world.

Did you know that there are more than 300,000 children and youth enrolled in the Christian schools of your church? This makes a mighty army. Think of what would happen if all of these young people would give themselves fully to the Lord, and if the Holy Spirit were to be poured out upon their lives.

This must be what the prophet of the Lord had in mind when she wrote: "With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin!"—*Education*, p. 271.

Won't you help to bring this wonderful vision to pass?

LESSON 6

Taste and See

PREPARATION: At the close of today's service you may want to give the children an opportunity to offer short testimonies. This can be very effective if conducted properly. What they say may be ever so brief, but if the Spirit of the Lord is present hearts will be blessed. It might be well to ask two students to give short testimonies before your talk. This will encourage others to do so at the conclusion. **SUGGESTED OPENING SONG:** *Singing Youth*, No. 80.

Extra police had to be called out in St. Louis to handle the long lines of job seekers when the Rio Syrup Company advertised a while back for a "taste jury" of eight boys and girls. Their only duties would be to eat ice-cream sundaes every weekend and approve or disapprove of the syrup toppings made by the company. And they would be paid for it too!

Company officials had originally figured that there would be about 500 applicants. But about 2,000 boys and girls showed up.

The applicants who failed to win jobs didn't lose out altogether. During their interviews each applicant tried eight different

flavors while company officials took note of their "taste aptitudes."

Most boys and girls would be glad to have a job where they would be paid for eating ice-cream sundaes—so it is easy to understand why a lot more youngsters showed up than the company officials anticipated. But why is it that so many people never get around to tasting something that is far better than ice cream?

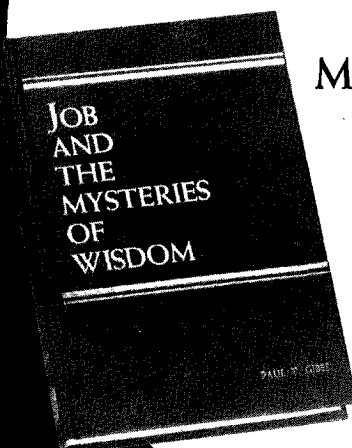
Let's turn in our Bibles and read Psalm 34: 8. "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

"Taste and see." You have to taste for yourself. If you had never eaten an apple, I could deliver a whole lecture on what an apple tastes like and you still wouldn't really know how an apple tastes until you ate one for yourself.

So it is with being a Christian. You have to taste and see for yourself. Only then can you know how wonderful it is to love and serve Jesus.

Sometimes young people will decide that they don't want anything to do with religion. They seem to think it will interfere with having fun. They seem to think that it will keep them from having joy and happiness. But how wrong they are! Here's why, as mentioned in *Messages to Young People*: "No man can really enjoy life without religion. Love to God purifies and ennoble every taste and desire, intensifies every affection, and brightens every worthy pleasure. It enables men to appreciate and enjoy all that is true, and good, and beautiful."—Page 264.

Think of Solomon. He tried to find happiness apart from God. But did he find it? Lis-



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ten for the answer as he tells some of the things he tried:

"I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure. . . . I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits: I made me pools of water . . . : I got me servants and maidens . . . ; also I had great possessions . . . : I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings . . . : I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy" (Eccl. 2:1-10).

Think of all the things he owned, all the pleasures he tried. He could say, "Whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them." How would you like to live like that for a week? How would you like to live that way for a year? Would it bring happiness?

It didn't bring happiness to Solomon. Do you know what he said after he had lived this way for years? "As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me," he moaned (verse 15).

What was wrong? Simply this: "No man can really enjoy life without religion." In turning away from God, Solomon turned away from joy and happiness. Pleasure he looked back upon as "vanity." Of laughter he concluded, "It is mad." And of wealth he said, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver."

It is no different today. "No man [or boy or girl] can really enjoy life without religion."

Why is this?

One reason is that without Christ there is no solution to the problem of sin. And sin is your biggest problem.

If I should ask each of you to take a blank piece of paper and without putting your name on it write down what your biggest problem is, I would get a variety of answers.

Some of you might answer that rules are your biggest problem. Others might write that your biggest problem is money, or school, or parents who are stricter than you think they should be, or perhaps that you want to be more popular.

But none of these things are really your biggest problem. Sin is your greatest problem, and the only solution to sin is Jesus.

You must have Jesus in order to have forgiveness. Let's turn and read the last part of 1 John 1:7. It says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." There is nothing else in the whole world that can do this.

You must have Jesus in order to gain victory over your bad habits. Turn to Jeremiah 13:23: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" Jeremiah asks. "Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

Rules may keep you from doing some things that are wrong, but rules won't make you good inside. Only Jesus can do that.

Many times, it is the little sins that trip us up. Too often we are like little Bobby. Bobby had met with a boyish temptation and had fallen, so his daddy took him aside and began to explain to him the necessity of

battling temptation and of trusting in Jesus to overcome.

"And you know, Bobby, that there are devils around us all the time, trying to get into our hearts, and as soon as we do wrong in they come. But if you want to go to heaven, you can't take any devils with you."

Bobby thought for a moment. "But, Daddy, can't I take even a wee, wee little devil with me?"

Sometimes we are a lot like Bobby. We may know that we are doing things which are wrong, but so often we think that it really won't matter too much. So many times some of our sins seem like little ones—like Bobby's "wee, wee little devil." We need to remember, as the Bible says, that it is "the little foxes that spoil the vines."

As we study the Bible and as we read books such as *Messages to Young People*, Jesus will speak to us through the Holy Spirit, convicting us of our need to overcome our sins—whether those sins be big ones or little ones.

Jesus is coming back soon, and we want to be ready. We don't want to be caught by surprise.

Elder A. S. Maxwell related the following interesting story in the *Signs of the Times*, back when Dwight Eisenhower was President. While the President was vacationing in Denver, his attention was called to an open letter in a Denver newspaper that told how six-year-old Paul Haley, dying of incurable cancer, had expressed a wish to see the President of the United States.

The President decided to grant the boy's request. So, one Sunday morning in August, a big limousine pulled up outside the Haley home and out stepped the President. He walked up to the door and knocked.

Mr. Donald Haley opened the door, wearing blue jeans, an old shirt, and a day's stubble. Behind him was his little son, Paul. You can imagine their amazement at finding President Eisenhower on their doorstep.

"Paul," said the President to the little boy, "I understand you want to see me. Glad to see you." Then he shook hands with the six-year-old, took him out to see the Presidential limousine, shook hands again, and left.

What a surprise that visit was! How the Haley family must have appreciated a busy President stopping by to see little Paul! Only one thing bothered Mr. Haley. He couldn't forget how he was dressed when he opened the door—with those jeans, and the old shirt, and an unshaven face. "What a way to meet the President of the United States!" he declared.

The Ruler of the universe is going to visit this planet very soon. To a lot of people His coming will be "as a thief in the night." It is important not only to get ready, but to be ready. Jesus said, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).

It is so important to make a decision for Christ while you are still young. You have ambition and enthusiasm and energy. You can use that enthusiasm and energy in the service of Christ. You can help other people understand that "no man can really enjoy life without religion." You can help them find forgiveness. You can help them gain victory over their sins. You can help them to be ready for the coming of Jesus.

But first, you yourself must have made life's most important decision. Have you done so?

You can do so much more for the Lord by becoming a Christian while you are in your youth. Matthew Henry became a great preacher because he accepted Christ when he was 11, and not when he was 70. Dr. Watts, the great song writer, was converted at nine, not at 90. Jonathan Edwards was converted at eight, not 80. And Ellen Harmon gave her heart to Jesus when she was 12, and was called to be God's messenger when she was 17.

You can give your heart to Jesus right now. Why not do so? Stand up just where you are, and tell God and all your friends that your life belongs to Jesus Christ.

Church Calendar

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|---|---------------|
| Bible Emphasis Sabbath | September 30 |
| Thirteenth Sabbath Offering | September 30 |
| (Southern Asia Division) | October 7 |
| Neighborhood Evangelism | October 7 |
| Church Missionary Offering | October 7-13 |
| Health Emphasis Week | October 14 |
| Sabbath School Visitors' Day | October 14 |
| Voice of Prophecy Offering | October 21 |
| Community Relations Day | October 28 |
| Temperance Day Offering | October 28 |
| Week of Prayer | November 4-11 |
| Church Missionary Offering | November 4 |
| Annual Sacrifice Offering | November 11 |
| Ingathering Campaign Launching Day | November 18 |
| (Campaign dates Nov. 18, 1967-Jan. 6, 1968) | |

REVIEW and HERALD

In 1849 a company of Sabbathkeeping Adventists whose background was the Millerite movement began to publish a paper called *The Present Truth*. In 1850 they also published five issues of *The Advent Review*. In November, 1850, these two papers merged under the name, *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, now titled simply *REVIEW and HERALD*. Its editorial objective remains unchanged—to preach "the everlasting gospel" in the context of the Sabbath, the Second Advent, and other truths distinctive of the Advent Movement.

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A Personal Message From the President of the General Conference

URBANO CASTILLO, one of our Spirit-filled lay preachers in the Philippines, recently prepared his one-thousandth candidate for baptism. Over the years Brother Castillo has been responsible for raising up 21 churches!

Angels played an important role in the recent establishment of new work in San Patricio, on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. My heart was warmed as I read of direct confrontation between the Lord's host and a man 65 years of age who was not even a believer.

More than 1,200 Moslems were baptized last year in the West Indonesia Union. Think of it! I don't suppose that in a single year we have ever baptized that many followers of the prophet, all around the world.

A priest's prediction that 200 would be baptized in Palompon, Leyte del Norte, in the Philippines, was fulfilled. Eight workers in the Dominican Republic won 1,052 to Christ during 1966.

Where did I get all of these thrilling news reports? From special correspondents around the world who write to me? Well, yes; but you can have the same heart-warming letters if you read the *Review and Herald* every week. Our church paper is filled with thrilling features—spiritual messages, mission experiences, something for the old, the young, and the in-between. I wouldn't miss the weekly visit of the *Review and Herald* for anything. I hope you won't either!

