

A CHRIST-CENTERED MESSAGE

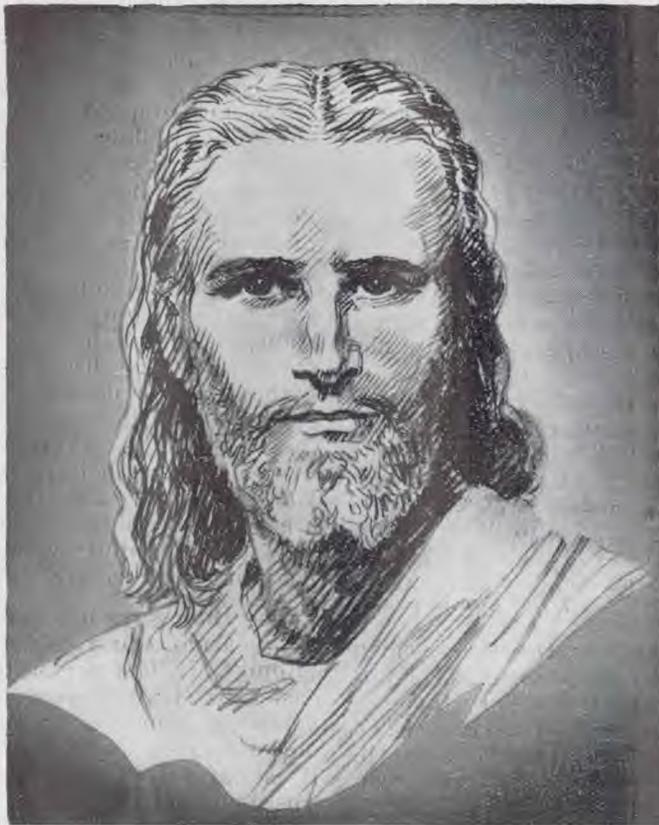
By Robert H. Pierson

Seventh-day Adventism is Christ centered. Adventists are taught to make Christ first, last, and best in everything. "Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love," this is to be the theme of the Adventist's contemplation. (Steps to Christ, pages 70, 71.)

A Judge attending an evangelistic effort I was holding once said, "I have been surprised to learn that Seventh-day Adventists believe in Christ. I have always been told you folks believe in seeking salvation through commandment keeping."

"My friend," I replied, "if there are any people in the world who believe in Christ and trust Him fully for salvation, Seventh-day Adventists are those people. We accept Christ as our crucified Saviour, our risen Lord, our pleading Advocate, our wonderful Life-giver, and our coming King. What is more, we Seventh-

day Adventists find in Jesus our perfect example, our Deliverer, our Helper, our Healer, and our Friend."



Two thousand years ago an aged preacher penned in three words one of the most sublime truths of the ages. Those three words sum up the Seventh-day Adventist attitude toward the Lord Jesus. The preacher was the apostle Paul; his message—as truly for us today as for the church at Colosse—declares, "Christ in all." (Col. 3:11).

"There are many different roads to heaven," a man once informed me. "You Adventists are on one road, I am on another. All the various Christian denominations are on their own individual roads to heaven. But they all converge at the gates of pearl and we all go sweeping in to the glory land together. It doesn't make much difference in this life, so long as we are on one of those roads."

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The Word of God does not support such a position. It says there is only one way into the kingdom—not *many*, only *one*! Listen to Jesus' own words, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14:6). Jesus did not subscribe to the theory of "many roads to heaven." He said there is only one way—"no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"!

If you and I ever walk the streets of gold and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth in the home of the saved, it will be because we have found the only way here—the *Jesus way*—and followed it. Jesus is the way. He is the only way. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Seventh-day Adventists believe this. The tenets of our faith are Christ centered. We believe the whole Bible because Jesus believed the Scriptures. (John 5:46, 47). We have a great deal to say about the Second Advent because Christ and His disciples spoke frequently of this great event as the climax of the plan of redemption. We say Jesus will come soon, for we believe His words recorded in Matthew 24 and other places where He explains the signs that will indicate His appearing is near.

We keep the commandments because Jesus kept the commandments (John 15:10). Seventh-day Adventists remember the seventh-day Sabbath because Christ, our example, made the Seventh day Sabbath at creation. Gen. 2:1-3; John 1:1-3), and kept the seventh-day Sabbath during His earthly ministry (Luke 4:16). We teach the doctrines of the judgment, the state of the dead, the reward of the righteous, the punishment of the wicked, the Spirit of Prophecy, and all our other tenets of faith as we do because Jesus, the Master Teacher, who spoke "as one having authority" (Matt. 7:29) also taught them.

Some of these blessed truths He revealed during His earthly ministry. Others He unfolded from the throne of His glory through His angel to John the Revelator (Rev. 1:1). It is all part of the Jesus way. He says He has sent His "angel to testify unto you these things in the churches" (Rev. 22:16). There is only one way. It is the Jesus way.

The touchstone of the great Christ-centered Advent message is, of course, the plan of redemption. The gospel—God's story—finds its center in heaven's blueprint to save the lost. In this vital part of God's programme,

Adventists have no new plan. Men are saved today as they have always been saved—through the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the same old and blessed story. There is no new way for a sinner to be saved from his iniquity. It takes the same old gospel. As Seventh-day Adventists, we need to hear it over and over again!

Certainly man needs saving, every one of us, without exception. Regardless of our culture, our education, our colour, our estate in life, our financial position or anything else, we all need help! "All have sinned," the apostle Paul declares (Romans 5:12). "We are all as an unclean thing" (Isa. 64:6). "There is none that doeth good, no not one" (Psalms 14:3).

Not a very flattering picture of ourselves, is it? As we stand before our mirrors in new, well-tailored clothes we may conclude we are not bad looking people—in fact, rather good-looking. But the Book says, "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). That inward look reveals "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" Isa. 64:6). On the streets of an Oriental city, I used to see a poor demented fellow clad in vermin-infested tatters and rags. If he was offensive to the human eye, how much more unlovely we must appear to our heavenly Father in our unsaved condition.

Yes, we are sinners. Sinners are people who have broken the law of God. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Some say the law has been abrogated, done away with—that we do not have to concern ourselves with it today. Inspiration declares that if we break the law, we sin. When we have other gods before the living God, we sin. When we take the Lord's name in vain, break His Sabbath, dishonour our parents, kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness, or covet, we are sinning.

The Bible says it is natural to do wrong—"the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7). If a person is in need, it is often easier to steal than to work. If you hate a person, it is natural to seek revenge. If someone possesses something better than I have, it is natural to covet it, desire it. Why is this true? Because we are born in sin. We inherited these evil tendencies from our father Adam. No matter how good morally we are or how well we may practise the golden rule, we are still sinful by nature.

That inherited nature must be dealt with. Unless help comes, as transgressors of God's

law, we are under the death penalty. "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23). Unless we find help, we are marked men and women, with a price on our heads. Death—not the natural death that is the result of sin, but the *second* death in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14), a death from which there is no resurrection—awaits the unrepentant transgressor.

Realization of his lost condition leads the sinner to cry out as did the jailer in the apostle's day: "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30).

There are three things that God might have done about sin at its inception. He might have ignored it. But such a course would not have been compatible with His justice. Violation of law demands punishment.

God might have let every guilty transgressor bear his own penalty—taste the second death as the price of disobedience. But this would not have been compatible with His mercy. The Scriptures declare that the Lord "delighteth in mercy" (Hosea 7:18). "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God." (Ezekiel 18:32).

There must be some other way!

Thank God there was! The Father could let One equal with Himself pay the penalty for the broken law and satisfy its just demands. This He did. Heaven's answer to the sinner's plaintive cry, "What must I do to be saved?" comes through the night air directly from the throne of God. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). This promise is just as real, just as personal today as when the words were spoken by the angel throng on the Judean hillside two thousand years ago.

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

Thank God that Christ was willing! The decision that led Jesus to the cross opened heaven's gates for you and me—for all repentant sinners who will accept His vicarious death. Such love demands our love, our best, our all.

Small wonder, then, that Seventh-day Adventists make Christ first, last, and best in everything. Love compels us to accept the one way, the only way, the *Jesus* way.

— *Review and Herald* —

My Pastor

By Edna A. Reid

My pastor is human. The hands of ordination laid upon him did not raise him above the frailties of humanity. He is prone to make mistakes, even as you and I are, though we are likely to expect perfection of him. He must depend upon the grace of God the same as anyone else. Of himself he is nothing. Yet he has been ordained to be God's messenger, and I acknowledge him as such.

My pastor bears responsibility for the souls of his congregation. His message must not be one of pleasing phrases to make us self-complacent. God calls upon him to reprove sin—not an easy task. Dare I criticize him when he does? Or dare I ignore his warnings?

My pastor is under the constant eye of the church. Let us hope it is not a critical eye. If he does not come up to my expectations, I must not let others know how I feel. I must not aid Satan in his work of criticizing and discouraging one of God's servants.

My pastor needs friendship. He must often feel the loneliness that comes with position. He must be a friend to all and often forego close associations lest he seem to be partial.

My pastor needs cooperation if his work is to be successful. I will assist him according to my ability and not occupy his time with trivial matters so that he is hindered in his work of winning souls.

My pastor needs my prayers. Your pastor needs yours.

— *Review and Herald*



By Roy Cottrell

"I am perplexed," said my friend Henry, "as I hear these various teachings concerning Christ's second coming. Some say He comes at death. Others teach that He comes to individuals as the Holy Spirit. One church group asserts that He came in the year 1914. Then I hear certain preachers telling that Christ's appearing will be a 'secret rapture.' So I hardly know what to believe."

Let me tell you how I answered my friend. As a Christian, I accept the Bible as the supreme court of appeal. Reading that Book I find two great events mentioned again and again — the first and second comings of Christ.

Evangelist Dwight L. Moody estimated that Christ's second coming was referred to more than 2000 times, while a writer in the *Free Methodist Magazine* states that it is "mentioned 1,518 times in the Bible and over 300 times in the New Testament. Such eminent preachers and Bible students as Martin Luther, John Knox, John Wesley, and John Milton possessed a deep and abiding faith in the return of Christ as the sublime and glorious hope of the church.

Why could these Christian leaders speak and write with such supreme assurance? Because of the united testimony of inspired patriarchs, prophets and apostles as Enoch, Job, Isaiah, Daniel, Peter, John and Paul. And Jesus Himself comforted His anxious disciples with the radiant promise: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, And if I go and prepare a place for

A Blessed, Be

you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

It is true that before our Lord's ascension, He assured His disciples that the "Comforter", or Holy Spirit, would be sent as His personal representative to abide with them constantly. John 14:15, 16; Acts 1:4, 5, 8. This promise was remarkably fulfilled at Pentecost, and in the signal growth and development of the early church.

But this was not all. As the disciples were gathered on the crest of Olivet for the farewell benediction, Jesus was parted from them and carried upward. Then as the little group gazed heavenward to catch the last glimpse of their ascending Lord, suddenly two angels stood at their side to convey the comforting promise: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which was taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

What could be more definite? Our Lord ascended personally and visibly; and, looking forward to the time of His return, the beloved John exclaimed, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him;" while Jesus Himself described the majestic event in these words: "The Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him." Rev. 1:7; Matt. 25:31.

My friend Henry freely admitted that in the light of these Scriptures it is certain that Christ did not come in 1914, and that His coming could not be at death. "But", he asked, "What about the so-called secret rapture?"

I pointed him to the one and only text in the Bible that some think support this theory. It reads: "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

Beautiful Hope

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." 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. Further, there are numerous opinions concerning the rapture. Some teach that while an express train is speeding along, the engineer, conductor, or some passenger may be suddenly caught away; or that a group of men may be working on a ranch or in a factory, and one or more of them may be instantaneously "raptured". . . . According to this teaching, all the righteous will then be caught up, and all who remain will constitute the multitude of the unsaved. Also, while the elect meet their Lord in the air, this teaching holds, the anti-christ will be revealed to bring seven years of appalling tribulation upon the ungodly.

"Why seven years?" asked Henry, "That," I replied, "is passing strange. The prophet Daniel outlined a period of seventy prophetic weeks (490 literal years), sixty-nine of which were to extend to Messiah, the Prince. Nearly all Bible students believe that these sixty-nine weeks extend from B.C. 457 to the time when Christ was baptized in A.D. 27. But why anyone should literally break off the last week, the seventieth (seven literal years) and place it nearly two thousand years later, is difficult to understand."

"Is this actually taught?" asked Henry. "I never before heard anything so preposterous. What does the Bible really teach?"

In response I proceeded to show that Satan is to wage fierce warfare against the "remnant" church "which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17. This conflict must take place while the elect are still on earth, not after they are translated.

I wish He would Come Tonight

By Marjorie Lewis Lloyd

I look about

On the storm without

*That breaks o'er a weary world,
And I think, as I watch the winds that blow;
'Tis time for the Master to come, I know;
I wish He would come tonight.*

For the road is long;

It has lost its song,

*And its last dim lights burn low.
But I think of the Master's promise to come,
And I know that the waiting is almost done;
I wish He would come tonight.*

But I see a task,

And I do not ask

*Why the Master so long delays;
For the work that I see is not yet done,
And I know that the Master cannot come —
He cannot come tonight.*

Long years ago

It was time to go

*To that promised country of light
'Tis a task, not time, that keeps Him away;
And it may be that I have caused the delay,
Though I wish He would come tonight*

So I find a place,

And I set my face

*To the task that is mine to do,
For I'm tired of colours that always fade;
I long to go home to the land He has made,
How I wish He might have come tonight.*

— Southern Tidings

CONDUCT PATTERNS OR THE CHRIST PATTERN

By Thomas A. K. Yatheh,
Bo, Sierra Leone

Many years ago a Chinese prince travelling through his domain came across a farmer offering as a sacrifice to his gods a cup of wine and a pig's foot. As he offered he prayed that his fields would increase their returns, that his gardens would produce beautiful blossoms, that his barns would be filled to overflowing; and that his whole life would be crowned with honour and prosperity.

The prince marvelled that a man who asked for so much should offer so little. He like that pagan's paltry pittance is the offering of the self-righteous man who holds before his god his own sin-saturated conduct pattern as the meritorious claim for all of heaven's bounties.

The Subtleness of Self-righteousness

Self-righteousness is the idolatrous substitution of the works of man for the works of the Spirit of God. It divorces God from human living. It is actually a species of self-workmanship. The self-righteous man experiences no actual contact of his spirit with the Spirit of the Divine. He invariably takes certain attitudes towards God or certain taboos of religion and makes of them the whole concept of righteous living. Like the Pharisees, in Jesus' time, he develops his own behaviour pattern. His religion is ego-centric.

History testifies to this age-long pestiferous human tendency for man to make his own God and his own righteousness. All paganism abounds with human deities that have been substituted for the true God. In this subtle sin, Christianity has not been exempt. It is the darkness of man's failure to rightly relate himself to the true God that enshrouds the modern world. Self-righteousness has been found among the most ardent religionists. It was all to no avail. Jesus said: Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:20.

The rabbis were ethical behaviourists. Their prime interest was outward conduct in conformity to prescribed traditions and legal principles. They substituted their outward obedience to the demands of their legal code in place of a genuine commitment of

themselves to God. This is always the core of self-righteousness, the substitute character a man offers the Deity when he is unprepared to make his life commitment to God.

The Secret of Power

"Stand thou still first, that I may cause thee to hear the word of God." These words of Samuel to Saul are significant. If we would hear the word of God, we must be still. A real minister is not so much the product of the schools as of "the secret place of the Most High." A preacher needs more than a degree; he needs the dynamic force of the gospel.

Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." These words were part of the answer concerning certain prophecies. The "times and seasons" are an absorbing study, yet more important than our seeking for dates and events which the Father has in His own authority, should we not be seeking for the anointing of the Spirit, that our message be not in word only, but also in the power and demonstration of the Spirit?

It is important that we know prophecy, but it is imperative that we know God. Are we emerging from our quiet hours with God, having reseen our risen Lord and heard anew His tender voice? Christian experience can be measured by one's attitude toward the secret place when one is all alone with God.

CLEVELAND EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN

By Pastor C. D. Henri

As I write, the great Cleveland Evangelistic campaigns in Monrovia, Liberia and Accra, (Ghana are over. At least the public halls are no longer in use, the large signs have been taken down, and the newspaper and printed advertisement is no longer used. But the campaign still continues, as the Spirit of God works upon the hearts of hundreds who are still in the valley of decision, and we, who are left behind endeavour to follow up this great interest. It will be months even years before the impact of these spirit-filled meetings will cease to be felt in these two great cities.

The tangible results can be seen as the crowds of new converts and interested hearers pack the churches. There is standing room only for many in Accra and Monrovia. Sixty-seven have been baptized in Accra, and on July 18 another ten to twelve will also be baptized. One hundred and four have been baptized in Monrovia.

Sabbath working hours and polygamous marriages hinder many, many others. Pray for them and for the many who "halt between two opinions," and remember those who must cultivate the "seed" and gather in the "harvest"!



News Notes

✘ Fourteen more people were baptized in Accra on Sabbath July 18, bringing the total of baptism as a result of the Cleveland's evangelistic campaign to 81.

✘ Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Brown, colporteurs in Accra, are the proud and happy parents of a baby boy on July 16. Mother and the new born child are doing well.

✘ A very successful Church Leaders' Council was held in the Ghana Mission at the town Kikam on July. Church leaders from all over Ghana were in attendance at this very inspirational meeting. The work of God shall certainly go forward, added impetus as a result of this well planned and foresighted convention. Pastor Mensah and his staff are to be complimented on a well planned and well executed council.

✘ In Sierra Leone, in the month of April, 14 of their teachers entered into a great evangelistic effort. Many were interested and have been enrolled in classes. We hope others of our teachers will follow the example of the teachers in Sierra Leone.

✘ In East Nigeria, the Laymen are on fire letting their light shine in 1959. The unusual has been done. Pastor Dickay reports that he has to encourage the laymen to hold back in their efforts as such a great interest has been created that they do not have enough workers to explore the great interest. Last year, 1,000 souls were baptized as a result of the work of the laymen of East Nigeria. We would like to encourage Pastor Dickay not to hold them back but we say full steam ahead by laymen and workers in proclaiming the remnant message.

✘ In Liberia, a church of 75 members of another denomination together with their Pastor are busy, studying the Advent Message, planning at the completion of these studies that all will be baptized including the Pastor and so will have a new Advent church in Liberia. The baptism as a result of the Cleveland's effort in Liberia now total 104.

✘ In the city of Benin, West Nigeria, a full scale evangelistic campaign is beginning. This is a new area and we pray God's blessing upon this endeavour in His Name.

✘ On July 19, Kwahu Hospital celebrated the graduation of its first class of nurses, consisting of 4 young men and two young women. Pastor G. D. King, Secretary of the Northern European Division was the principal speaker. The Government District Commissioner passed out the prizes. J. B. Fridley and H. J. Welch from the Union office were present. Two of the graduates had received special credit honours in the Government examination.

✘ Plans are moving along rapidly toward the opening of the new Adventist College of West Africa. Building plans have been approved. Land is being cleared. Electricity and water plans are going on. Quarters will be rented to provide place for staff and a limited number of students to start class work in October of this year.

✘ The Evangelistic school at Bekwai has an enrolment this year of 40 students from Sierra Leone, North Nigeria, West Nigeria, East Nigeria, Togoland and Ghana. The students are all very busy preparing for the G.C.E. and entrance into the Adventist College of West Africa.

✘ Pastor Louis Nielsen of Bekwai Seminary is taking a group of Evangelistic students to Northern Ghana during the August-September holidays for evangelistic field work.

✘ Word has come from Sierra Leone that the youngest child of Pastor and Mrs. A. M. Moyer is very seriously ill in the hospital in Freetown. Our hearts go out to the parents, and in earnest prayer to God, for the baby's rapid and complete recovery.

✘ The Ghana Mission was grieved by the sad news of the passing away on the 8th of May, 1959, of Mrs. Susanna Amofah, the wife of Pastor Amos Amofah, District Leader, Kumasi.

They married, and have laboured together in the Lord's vineyard in different places in Ghana, for the past 26 years. She has left behind 7 children. May she rest from her labours till the resurrection morning and may the Lord strengthen, keep, guard and comfort the bereaved family.

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Editor: Pastor C. D. HENRI



THE ROLE OF *Our Schools* in THE LAST DAYS

By G. E. SHANKEL



There are serious reasons why we have a distinctive system of schools in such an hour as this.

Prophecy describes the religious confusion of the last days as Babylon. This confusion is equally true in the world of education, for education and religion have always been closely identified.

All too often the role of the school is as expressed in the words of a prominent educator as follows: "Partly the school prepares for the grim business of making a living and partly for nothing. Breathing the tainted air of a machine-ridden age, it is itself acquiring the character of a monotonous smooth-running machine, setting the same stamp on every child that passes through it. The teacher is a mere operator of this machine, a factory hand executing mechanically the explicit instructions delivered to him."

Our denominational system of education should be as reformatory as our doctrine; otherwise, our religion will soon suffer. This is the lesson of all religious history.

Like the Pharisees of old, it is quite possible to hold the doctrine intact and yet live ineffectively because of an essentially poor basic philosophy of life and action. If we fail to train our youth in a vital way of life, then truth itself will become blunted and compromised.

In the time of the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, Luther and his associates began a system of schools of a distinctive nature to train the future guardians of truth. Because of the controversial events, these schools were soon neglected and the Jesuit order took over even the Protestant education. The result was that the Protestant cause was halted.

In this final stage of the Reformation, the last call out of Babylon, how very vital it is that we maintain the distinctive nature of our schools. The welfare of our youth and the welfare of our cause depend upon it. We have committed to us the greatest task ever given to men, and how imperative it is that all our youth be inculcated with the very spirit of this supreme task. If the whole world knew what we know about the events that are right upon us, we can well believe that the world's educational system would be revolutionized overnight. We must shape our educational work only in the light of the one supreme event to which each day brings us closer.