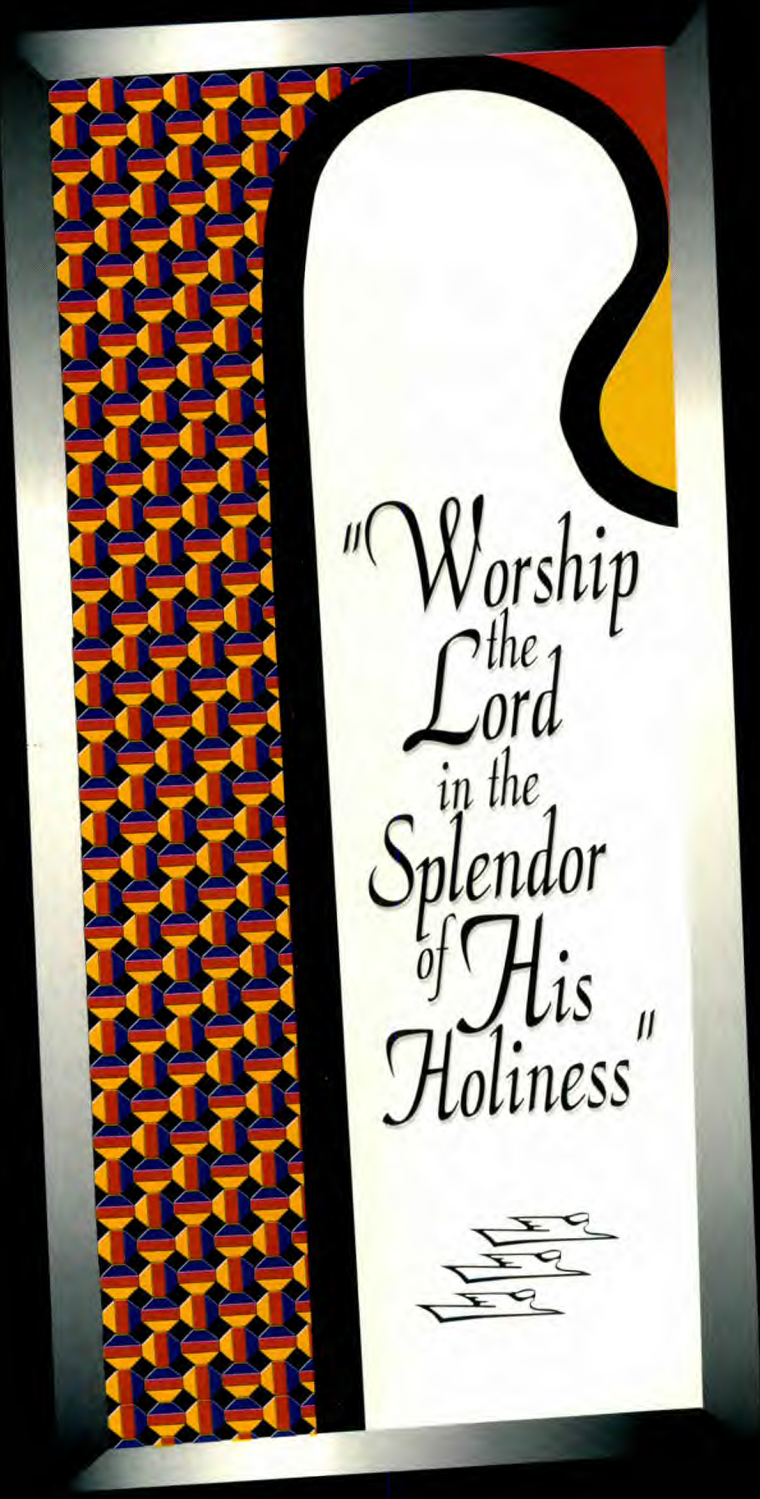


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A Quarterly Resource for Local Church Elders

Number Six

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Honoring this divine mandate, well-known Adventist artist, Alfred Lee, was commissioned by the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists to portray on canvas the truth as it is in Jesus. Lee, who teaches at the School of Art at Montemorelos University in Mexico, already has painted such masterpieces as the beautiful mural *Christ of the Narrow Way*, showcased by the White Estate at the General Conference headquarters.

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- | | |
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Elder's Digest

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Worship—The Greatest Priority

Joel Sarli



The needs of the congregation are numerous—buildings, budgets, training programs, education. Yet here is something that overshadows them all: the need of worship and “practical results of [true] communion with God” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 47).

Worship is more important than anything else in the church program and the elements for doing it are worthy of our most intense study. “The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ’s representatives, are God’s appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defileth” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 491). “Our meetings . . . should be pervaded with the very atmosphere of heaven” (*Review and Herald*, November 30, 1886).

But are they?

It seems that in vision Ellen G. White was contemplating Adventist worship services when she wrote: “There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habits and customs of the people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred, things which connect us with God are fast losing their hold upon our minds and hearts, and are being brought down to the level of common things” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 491).

Surely this is a challenge to every leader of worship, and the elder is an integral part of that leadership in the local congregation. What is happening in your church? Is the service led in harmony with the clear principles of worship found in the Bible or is the concentration more on human experiences? “The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary where they met with God in sacred service has largely passed away. Nevertheless, God Himself gave the order of His service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature” (*Ibid.*, p. 491).

At the very heart of the Advent message is a call to “worship him that made heaven and earth.” True worship is more than organization, musical style, the incorporation of skits, or any other techniques. These are peripheral elements. Some of us, in an attempt to address the real issues of Adventist worship, are just dealing with the peripherals. True worship springs from the depths of the human soul and must be inspired by a sense of power outside of and beyond its control. It had its beginning when man communed with the Creator in the “cool of the day.” That intimate exchange was broken by sin, yet the human spirit can still commune with God, and that is what worship is all about.

At the heart of worship is the fundamental need for God. Worship restores our communion with Him, opening the doors so that the needs of our souls are met. The result of such a relationship with God is that the worshiper feels the inner desire to be like Him and to conform his life with the life of the Saviour.

In this issue we focus on the importance of several elements of worship and how they affect our religious experience. We firmly believe that to help a person—child or adult—to sense the presence of God is the greatest service an elder or anyone can render to his or her congregation.



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Congregational Singing

by H. A. Miller

Medieval worship was characterized by a silent congregation. Each meaningful act of worship was performed for them, and their duty was to enter quietly, sit reverently, and depart after beholding a service that appealed to the eye and ear, but one in which they had no voice: they were “spectators rather than participants.”

Among Luther’s reforms was the introduction of congregational singing. This raised the dignity of the individual believer and gave him a voice in the service. On the wings of song the doctrines of the Reformation were carried to all parts of Germany where they instantly took root in a vigorous form. The acceptance of this new vocal freedom was so complete as to tag the Protestants as “Hymn Singers.” Protestants in general, today could hardly claim the exalted title of “Hymn Singers.” It can and should be in this day one of the “glories of Protestantism.”

A hymn sung by the congregation means more than music, as such, by a large group producing volume of tone, or as a means of obtaining variety in the service to be omitted if occasion demands. It is verily an act of worship, pleasing to God as the assembled worshipers unite harmonically, and in melody of voice express through a devotional poem the united sentiments of their hearts.

Listen to the testimony of a once-famous organist, Henry Smart, illustrating the effect of congregational hymn upon him, a great musician: “Do you hear that?” he asked, as the tone poured from hundreds of throats. “That, to my mind, is finer than any choir.”

When one voice is uplifted in praise there may come a degree of inspiration and uplift. But when a

thousand join in the singing of an hymn, there is majesty and a surge of inner power that speaks well to the soul. In the singing of the hymn by the congregation there lies the attainment of greater spiritual possibilities.



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“Congregational singing is the most practical as well as the most important department of church music. Its glories are within the reach of every active parish. Its restoration as a universal custom is certain, and its supremacy among the form of church music is only a question of spirituality in Christian work. Its establishment involves no risk or undue expense, and its success can bring with it no dangers. On the contrary, its maintenance is almost of necessity a distinct and powerful spur to the religious life of the parish, refreshing, cheering, and edifying all who come within its influence” (Waldo S. Pratt, *Parish Problems*).

The prayer is made through the minister; the choir leads the worshipers in musical meditation, but the congregational hymn belongs to those in the pews and becomes one of the high points of the whole worship service. What is there to match the power of a well-chosen hymn sung by all the congregation? Why are we so willing to reduce the number of hymns to make

room for other types of music not so vital to the spiritual welfare of those who worship?

Did I hear someone say, “But of what artistic value is congregational singing? It does not compare in rendition to a number by the choir.” Congregations sing without rehearsal, and frequently they sing songs with which they are not too familiar. The effect of the music may not be pleasing to the musically critical ear; but it is not an exercise the aim of which is to

produce artistic results. Would it not be well for us to look for spiritual results and make this primary in our thinking as we hear a congregation sing! This lack of artistic value is not a serious shortcoming.

“The singing is not always to be done by a few. As often as possible, let the entire congregation join” (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 144).

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). It is not how lovely is the music but how deeply sincere; not the perfection of sound vibrations with an insincere heart, but a sincere heart though the vibrations be imperfect. If God required from His creatures music that would please His ear, who would dare say that his

particular choice would satisfy the demand? Then let us enter into this portion of the service which is distinctly Protestant, and with an honest heart lift our voices in praise and prayer to the best of our ability, and our souls will be watered and Heaven’s ears will be open to the sweet sounds rising from a group of worshippers.

Let us beware of clipping the wings of the soul of the congregation by squeezing out one hymn from the full quota of hymns by other less essential things, and thereby gradually lose one of the former earmarks of real Protestantism. **E**

H. A. Miller was professor of Music in the Southern Missionary College, Collegedale, Tennessee, when this article was written.

More Music in Communion Service

by Joel Sarli

Many of our special services as well as our regular church ones could be greatly improved and beautified if elders, pastors, and musicians could take more time to plan them together, and if more attention were given to the glorious privileges and opportunities of worship in song.

Some time ago a singing evangelist and pastor sent to the Ministerial Association some fine suggestions and an outline for an actual communion service he has used. He writes: “I have always felt that a communion service could be made more beautiful if more music were used. I have tried this on three occasions now, and every time the members have commented on how beautiful the service was. It was the music that did it! Only the choir used hymnals. With the choir leading out, the congregation sang from memory, and they were seated for every song except the last one. Thus the congregational singing was more of a spontaneous type that was a real expression of their feelings in the service. It was sung softly by all and with real expression, and of course we used only familiar songs.

“A copy sheet of the entire service was made for each choir member and the organist led out in the singing at the appropriate times without any announcement. The reading under item 14 was a fitting climax to the whole service.”

All the hymns used in this service were from the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*. Here is the information which appeared on the mimeographed sheet:

Communion Service

- Opening exercises
- Prayer
- Choir— Number 152 “Tell Me the Story of Jesus”
- Sermon: “Until He Comes”
- Separation for the ordinance of preparation
- Congregation returns

Service of Lord’s Supper

1. Choir sings number 154, 155 “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

2. Duet and choir sing number 158 “Were You There?”
3. Scripture reading (bread) I Cor. 11:23-24
4. Prayer
5. Breaking of bread by elders; choir sings number 271 “Break Thou the Bread of Life”
6. Bread given to deacons and organ plays in the background.
7. While bread is passed, congregation and choir sing number 159 “The Old Rugged Cross”
8. Deacons return and organ plays in the background.
9. Scripture reading (wine) I Cor. 11:25
10. Prayer
11. During the passing of wine, the congregation and choir sing number 184 “Jesus Paid It All”
12. Partaking of wine and organ plays in the background
13. During the collecting of glasses, congregation and choir sing number 329 “Take the World, but Give Me Jesus”
14. Pastor and choir read number 402 “By Christ Redeemed”; Choir responds at end of each stanza “Until He Comes”
15. Choir and congregation sing number 206 “Face to Face”
16. Silent Benediction

This was an idea I got some years ago from Dr. Griffith Jones. The selection of songs is only a sample and can, of course, be changed as desired.

With the pastor, elder, organist, and choir members all in possession of such a carefully planned program, the service need not be interrupted by any announcements or instructions, but can proceed quietly and reverently right through to the closing hymn.



We are sure that our elders, pastors and musicians greatly appreciate this suggestion that will be valuable and helpful. *But we want your ideas too.* Many who read these lines will have more suggestions for this and other services as well. Why not share them with your fellow Elders and Pastors? Send them along to *Elder’s Digest*. Thank you.

The Art of Announcing a Hymn

by Edward E. White

Anouncing a hymn does not require a university degree or a knowledge of music and poetry. However, it does call for a thoughtful transition from whatever precedes the singing, to prepare the audience for receiving the message intertwined with the music.

Too often we sing our hymns mindlessly out of habit or tradition, ignorant of the author's original purpose. When that happens, are we really doing much more than barking at print? How important that whoever announces the hymn does so in reference to its meaning.

Picture yourself in church, sitting quietly after the sermon. The elder rises and says: "Our closing hymn is number 541." How inspired are you by that announcement? Granted, it is necessary to inform the congregation where to find the hymn, but wouldn't it be better to say something like this: "Our closing hymn, number 541, summarizes the message we've just heard. Notice the threefold prayer in the three stanzas 'Lord, speak to me,' 'Lord, lead me,' 'Lord, strengthen me.' Hymn number 541."

SUGGESTIONS

1. *Preview the hymn.* Is it too much to ask the elder to read through the hymn before announcing it? To my sorrow, I have heard more than once: "Let us sing the consecration hymn, Number 330, 'Take My Life and Let It Be.'" Now, what kind of consecration is that, when we ask the Lord to take our life and then let it alone! That is precisely what "let it be" means. A simple solution is to add the next word in the hymn, which does not appear in the title: "Take my life, and let it be consecrated."

When you do that, the audience sits up and takes note. For the first time some will have an idea of what they are asking the Lord to do with their lives when they sing that hymn.

2. *Find the heart of the hymn.* The definition of a hymn requires that it be based upon Scripture; otherwise, it is simply a sacred song. It was my privilege to

supply the scriptural references to every hymn in *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*. This daunting task left me with admiration for those writers who transformed and collated various texts into a harmonious whole. Some hymns even gave the nucleus of a sermon.

One notable example is Charles Wesley's composition in celebration of his own conversion. An elder might typically announce it by saying, "Now let us sing Number 198, 'And Can It Be.'" The audience dutifully mouths the words, ignorant of their rich spiritual background. Wesley was aligning his own experience with the New Testament incident in which Peter found himself miraculously delivered from prison into freedom:

*"Long my imprisoned spirit lay
fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth and followed Thee."*

How many times have you sung those words without connecting them to Peter's angelic deliverance from prison or to Wesley's personal testimony? A thoughtful preview of the hymn would identify its link with the book of Acts. Further research would uncover the connection to Wesley's conversion. All this would enable the announcer to bring new life to the congregational singing of that grand old hymn.

3. *Don't preach another sermon.* Some who seek to avoid a superficial announcement of a hymn find themselves preaching their own sermon. There is no need to fall into that other extreme. Announce the hymn briefly and announce it well.

The Bible directs us to "sing praises with understanding" (Ps.47:7). Thoughtfully introducing a hymn helps make this possible. **E**

Edward White, Ph. D., a retired minister and music teacher, writes from Bracknell, England. He is the author of Singing With Understanding.

It Oils The Gears

by Robert H. Pierson

I was going through customs in Hoboken, New Jersey. With a load of suitcases and parcels on a little trolley, I approached one of the customs officials. He looked worn out.

"I'm sorry to trouble you so early in the morning," I said to him. "You must have had a long night of it. You look tired." The officer eyed me a bit incredulously. "Yes, sir," he replied with a half smile. "I've been up most of the night, and I am a bit tired.

We've had an extra run of passengers the past few days. But you're the first one I've had speak like that to me in a long time. Most passengers are eager to get on their way. Usually their tempers are short if there's any holdup."

I explained to him that I am a Seventh-day Adventist minister, that I travel a lot and "bother" the customs and immigration officials frequently. A few more words of kindly sympathy with the good man about his heavy program, and he had cleared my bags and sent me on my way with words of sincere appreciation. Christian courtesy certainly smooths the way!

During His earthly ministry Jesus introduced a new spirit, a new relationship, which He desired to see among His followers. "A new commandment I give unto you," He said, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34).

He set the example in true courtesy. "Christ was courteous, even to His persecutors; and His

true followers will manifest the same spirit" (*The Ministry of Healing*, page 489).

The Saviour was subjected to gross insults and indignities. He was physically maltreated in the most cruel and humiliating manner. But even to Pilate, at whose hand He had suffered much, Jesus was courteous. He sought to excuse His judge. "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin," He said patiently (John 19:11).

"He spoke as one having authority, and His word was with power; yet in all His intercourse with rude and violent men He did not use one unkind or discourteous expression" (*The Desire of Ages*, page 515).

The results of Jesus' kindly courtesy toward Pilate are revealed in John 19:12: "And from thence forth Pilate sought to release him." Courtesy always pays! The Master desires that the lives of all His followers be enriched with this heavenly attribute. "The grace of Christ in the heart will impart a heaven-born dignity and sense of propriety. It will soften whatever is harsh, and subdue all that is coarse and unkind" (*The Desire of Ages*, page 515). "Christianity will make a man a gentleman" (*The Ministry of Healing*, page 489).

One day Thomas Jefferson was riding in a carriage with his grandson. They met a slave, who removed his hat and bowed respectfully to the distinguished statesman. As was his custom, Mr. Jefferson returned the salutation by raising his hat. The grandson ignored the slave's greeting. Turning to the boy at his side, the great man said, "Thomas, do you permit a slave to be more of a gentleman than yourself?"

The Christian is always courteous. His every word and act will be mingled with a courtesy so kindly, so Christlike, that no offense can be taken. Powerful is the influence for good that is exercised by a consecrated, active Christian gentleman" (*Special Testimonies*, Series B, No.11, p.14).



The word courtesy has its origin in the word court, indicating that it is a royal trait. Courtesy is an act of respect—not something demanded as a right but rather extended as a favor. We are courteous when we treat people as they do not deserve to be treated. Christian politeness is Christian refinement, Christian gentleness. It is being kind, considerate, and thoughtful under all circumstances. A Christian will act thus toward those who mistreat him as well as to those who are friendly with him.

“The essence of true politeness is consideration for others” (*My Life Today*, page 191). “A thoroughgoing Christian draws his motives of action from his deep heart love for his Master. Up through the roots of his affection for Christ springs an unselfish interest in his brethren. Love imparts to its possessor grace, propriety, and comeliness of deportment. It illuminates the countenance and subdues the voice; it refines and elevates the whole being” (*The Ministry of Healing*, page 490).

Christian courtesy includes an “unselfish spirit,” a “gentle grace,” and a “winsome temper.” “These are but reflections of the character of Christ. All the real tenderness and courtesy in the world, even among those who do not acknowledge His name, is

from Him. And He desires these characteristics to be perfectly reflected in His children” (*Education*, page 242).

Of Jesus it was said, “He was never rude.” He “never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul” (*Steps to Christ*, page 12). “The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver, never makes him coarse or rough or uncourteous” (*Letter 134*, 1901). May God help us as followers of His dear Son to purge ourselves of unchristian frankness, which is often nothing but rudeness.

May He help us to never unnecessarily speak a severe word or give needless pain to a sensitive soul. Sometimes we may find ourselves in situations that require us to speak plainly to others, but on such occasions may God help us to speak as Jesus did, in a spirit of true Christian courtesy. People do not resent being corrected or counseled by one who loves them.

God grant that we may always exemplify the courtesy of our Master. **E**

Robert H Pierson was pastor, evangelist, administrator and president of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1966 to 1979. This chapter is from his book Faith on Tiptoe (Southern Publishing Association, Nashville, Tennessee, 1967).

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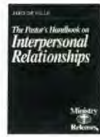
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Preach the Word!

by Carlyle B. Haynes

The following is taken from pp. 26-36 of Carlyle B. Haynes Speaks to Young Ministers, six lectures Elder Haynes delivered at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in 1954.

HOW CAN WE BEST DRAW IN THE GOSPEL NET?

The Christian minister today should not be a minister of rites and ceremonies, a minister of lights and litanies, a minister of pageants and processions, a minister of vestments and garments, a minister of shows and playlets, a minister of spectacular exhibitions and theatrical demonstrations, nor even a minister of motion pictures and visual aids. As in the beginning, ministers should be emphatically and exclusively “ministers of the word” (Luke 1:2). “Christ sent me,” Paul said, “not to baptize, but to preach the gospel” (1 Cor 1:17).

ONE EVANGELIST’S INNOVATIONS

I once attended a meeting conducted by a well-known Adventist evangelist . . . whom many younger ministers were consulting for suggestions to improve their work. His methods, which were certainly innovations among us, were the subject of much discussion.

The tabernacle was well lighted and decorated. On the large platform were papier-mache beasts with horns, multiple heads, wings, and cruel claws and teeth—horrible and fantastic things, which drew all eyes and created much conversation. On the rafters above the platform were hung many lights, and on each side of the platform two spotlights [were ready to be] centered on the preacher.

There was music, much music—instrumental, vocal, choral, solos, duets, quartets, and two little tots who sang an amusing ditty which brought a round of laughter and a handclap or two. Then came an impressive theme song, which many seemed to know and I had never heard. At its close the preacher entered in a sort of hush.

He attracted everyone’s attention, including mine. . . . He was dressed in spotless white, with white tie, white socks, white shoes. Even the Bible he carried was bound in white. A woman at my back exclaimed breathlessly to her companion, “Isn’t he a honey?” and I had to agree. He was indeed. From that first

moment he was the focus of attraction. No one could hear, see, or think of anything else but that “honey” of a preacher. His words were little noticed, yet no one moved his eyes from the speaker, and all heads swung around with him as he stood or moved about in the glare of the spotlights. He touched several beasts with what appeared to be tender solicitude, gracefully removing three horns from one of them and substituting in their place one horn with a head wearing a triple tiara.

Returning to my hotel room, I tried to recall what he may have read from the Bible. I could not remember his opening that beautiful white Bible at all. While I am sure he must have done so, I did not notice it. The last thing I remember passing through my mind before I sank into slumber was, “He certainly is a ‘honey.’”

I mention the incident only because I desire to contrast it with another experience that occurred while I was a pastor in New York City.

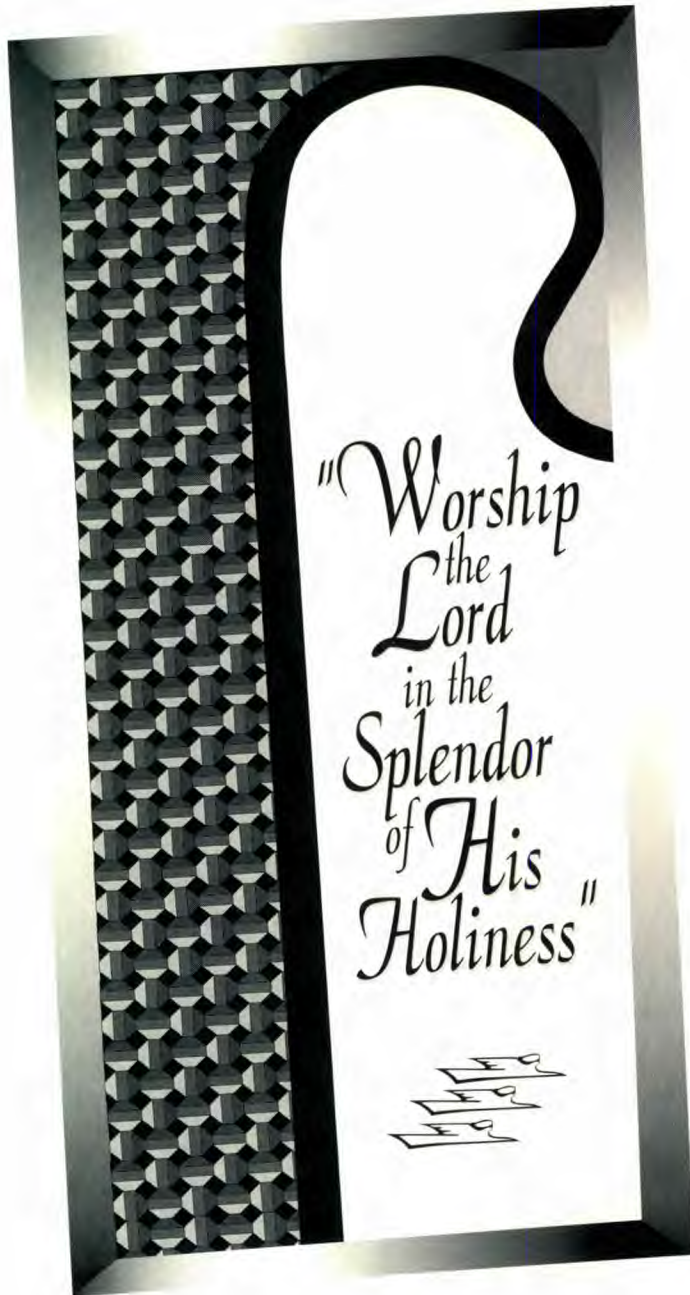
EXPOSITORY PREACHING

For a number of years I had heard reports about the ministry of a great British expositor, George Campbell Morgan. In his younger days he had been rejected for ordination because of the poor quality of his preaching, [but] he became known as “the Prince of the Expositors.”

Learning that Morgan was coming to New York City to conduct a two-week series of studies in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, I was delighted at the prospect.

I arrived at the church a half hour before the meeting was to begin. Knowing the church accommodated 2,500 easily, I had no worry about finding a seat. But I was wrong; [already, it seemed] the seats were taken. The ushers directed me into the gallery, and fortunately one seat was left there. With a sigh of relief I sat down, astonished beyond measure that 2,500 people would turn out like this on a Monday night.

Continued on page 22



The Elder as Leader
of True Worship

Does the Bible Give
Us a Pattern
of Worship?

Biblical
Characteristics
of True Worship

and

☐ Christ ☐

The Center
of Worship



The Elder as Leader of True Worship

by W. E. Strickland

There is an inherent desire within the human heart to worship, to reverence, to adore, and to serve a Supreme Being. The heathen prostrates himself upon the ground before his god of mud, wood, or stone. It is an act of worship, and usually comes from a sincere heart. He may even offer himself for bodily mutilation or cause his children to suffer in order to appease his god, and by such acts show his willingness to bend his will to a higher being.

His acts of worship, his feeling of dependence upon his god, may well cause us to wonder: Are we Christians, worshipers of the eternal Creator, the true God, as careful, as reverent, as filled with awe and adoration in our worship as we should be? I wonder!

Has education and our high standard of living caused us to trust too much in our own ability and too little in our eternal God? Do we really worship Him as we ought! Do we show the proper reverence and respect? Do we tread softly in His sanctuary? Do we as elders and pastors set the right example and so conduct ourselves that those who look to us for guidance are led to realize the majesty and glory of the God whom they serve, as well as His love and tenderness?

Let us consider the work of the elder as a leader of worship.

Worship Attitude

We serve the God of heaven not because we are afraid of Him but because He is a God of love. Fear must never be our motive. We know that His thoughts

toward us are thoughts of good and not of evil; therefore our worship must be sincere and genuine, as well as reverent and respectful.

J.H. Jowett, in his book *The Preacher, His Life and Work*, says: "It is our God-appointed office to lead men and women who are weary and wayward, exultant or depressed, eager or indifferent, into 'the secret place of the Most High.' We are to help the sinful to the fountain of cleansing, the bondslaves to the wonderful songs of deliverance. We are to help the halt and the lame to recover their lost nimbleness. We are to help the broken-winged into the healing light of 'the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' We are to help the buoyant to clothe themselves with 'the garment of praise.' We are to help to redeem the strong from the atheism of pride, and the weak from the atheism of despair. We are to help little children to see the glorious attractiveness of God, and we are to help the aged realize the encompassing care of the Father and the assurance of the eternal home. This is something of what our calling means when we enter the pulpit of the sanctuary."

The elder as leader of worship is God's person. You have been chosen and set apart for God's business. You speak for God. You are to lead His flock like a shepherd. Therefore your manner of worship has a direct bearing upon the people whom you minister to. They are definitely affected by it. Your attitude and

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ATONEMENT FOR SIN

"The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption—the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers" (*Gospel Workers*, pg. 315).

manner will be reflected by your people. Upon the elder rests the burden of worship. You should accept this responsibility knowing that God as well as man expects you to be faithful in leading his flock.

The Worship Service

As the Sabbath school is the church at study, so the church service is the church at worship. Preaching is only part of the worship service. Too often only the preaching seems to be considered important. Many times the service becomes merely an hour of entertainment or promotion, with occasionally one of instruction in doctrine thrown in.

The whole period should be one of worship, with the pastor or elder as the leader. And everything done in the service should be done under the direction of the leader.

It is your duty to guard against any appearance of looseness, shoddiness, or carelessness, and with every act help the congregation realize that they are in the presence of the Almighty. Order and system should prevail, for the God we worship is a God of order; beauty and cleanliness are His delight. Encourage quietness. By precept and example lead the people into the spirit of reverence.

Whenever possible, provide parents with a place where they can take their little ones. However, the pastor and elder must be sympathetic and understanding. Recognize that the sister who has risen early, fed and dressed her children, and brought them dutifully to Sabbath school and church, is one who struggles perhaps against overwhelming odds with a crying baby and wiggly children. It is not easy to train little folks to sit quietly and listen to much that they do not understand.

The real problem may not be with the children; it may well be with the worship leader. If children are to worship, they must be helped to understand. We must never display impatience or

any attitude that would cause a member to be hurt. Thank God for the mothers in our congregations who struggle to bring their little families to the house of worship. Let us be sympathetic and helpful.

See to it that the choir maintains a worshipful attitude throughout the service. It would be far better to have no choir at all than to have one whose members by their dress and attitude before the congregation distract the people and cause them to lose the spirit of reverence.

Preliminaries (?)

There are no preliminaries in worship. The offering, hymns, prayer, special music, preaching, benediction—all are *definite acts of worship* and should be considered as such. Even the announcements can be made in a spirit of worship.

The pastor or elder should guide the service and not let it drift. Know where you are going, how long it takes to get there, and when you will arrive. Start on time and plan definitely to stop on time, but not allow the desire to do so to cause anyone to lose the spirit of worship.

When those who lead the service take their places upon the rostrum, everyone should know their part and speak clearly. Every act and word must carry dignity. There should be no lounging, whispering, or shifting carelessly about. Show an active interest in every part of the service.

Some time ago, while attending a meeting in one of our churches, I was privileged to occupy the platform with several other ministers. During the singing of a very inspiring and helpful solo two of the ministers carried on a conversation that was so noticeable that it attracted considerable attention. When at the close of the solo they both said a loud "Amen!" it brought smiles to the faces of many. The minister's and elder's own quietness

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THE GOSPEL

"Hanging upon the cross Christ was the gospel. Now we have a message, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.' Will not our church members keep their eyes fixed on a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered? This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the sorrowing, the hope for every believer" (SDA Bible Commentaries, vol. 6, pg. 1113).



Christ

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ALL INFLUENCE

"The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish every earthly and hellish power. In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection. Yea, more, it was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror" (SDA Bible Commentaries, vol. 6, pg. 1113).

and attention to everything that is taking place is of the greatest importance. Nothing they say or do should detract from the service in any way.

There ought not to be any show of pride or vanity in the leaders, but rather humility, remembering that God's people are in the act of worship. Self should be so effaced that the people can see past the pastor and elder to their God.

Now let us consider each part of the worship service.

Announcements

Announcements of the various interests and activities of the church are important. Deal with them with dignity and clarity, so that no one will be left questioning. Do not cheapen the act by needless repetition. Do not spend time that could be used better elsewhere. Where possible, publish all announcements in the bulletin and *do not read them at the service*. Once the congregation learns where to look for announcements they will find them. Our Father's business is important and may well find a place in our worship.

Hymns

In the selection of hymns use only such as denote worship. Avoid hymns that are languid, dreamy, or hollow. Give no cause for thoughts other than those of reverent worship. Make the singing a definite act of worship and adoration, and instruct the music leader and pianist or organist in the importance of this attitude of reverence.

In relation to special music it would be good to remember the instruction of the *Church Manual*: "Choir leaders should work in close collaboration with the minister or church elder in order that the special musical selections harmonize with the theme of the sermon. The choir leader is under the

direction of the pastor or elders of the church, and does not work independently of them. The choir leader should counsel with them, not only as to the music to be rendered, but also concerning the selection of singers and musicians."

Maybe it is time for elders to act more clearly in helping to define a proper use of music in the worship service.

Offering

**Not
by might,
nor by
power,
but by
My spirit,
saith the
Lord of
hosts."**

When we bring our offerings, our sacrifices, and lay them at our Saviour's feet, this is not a business matter. It is our desire to return respectfully and humbly that which belongs to God and that which we wish to give Him freely because of our love and appreciation for His goodness. There ought to be no vestige of crudeness or force, nor should the minds of the hearers be caused to think other than of God's goodness, the need of His cause and their own ability to give. Fortunate is the person who is able to keep the people thinking of heaven while they empty their pocketbooks for God's work on earth. Bringing our offerings to God is worship of the highest order.

Scripture Reading

The Scripture reading is an opportunity for God to speak to His people. It should be well prepared, and the one who reads it should know where to place emphasis. Do not hurry, but rather make the lesson a part of the sermon and magnify it not by comment but by the confidence with which it is read.

Prayer

The worship-hour prayer, of all prayers, must be deeply respectful. It is then that the pastor or elder leads the congregation on bent knee to the



throne of grace. As they bow before their Maker, they must be conscious that the one praying is speaking for them. Every sentence should be well chosen and spoken with due reverence. Studiously avoid carelessness or undue repetition. Speak for the people out of an understanding of their needs. It is a tremendous responsibility to voice the heartfelt needs of all, and for this there must be a most thorough preparation. The one who leads in prayer must be so well acquainted with God in private that the public prayer will be the natural outflowing of a God-touched heart. Prepare the words; don't say just anything. Be definite and orderly. Make the requests known to God in a spirit of true worship and reverence.

The Sermon

The sermon is your opportunity to speak for God. You are God's mouth-piece. Remember always that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Whatever the burden of the message to be presented, recognize and preach for a verdict and ask for action, praying that you so surrendered yourself that the Spirit of God can speak through you. The sermon should always be a serious business, having the saving of souls as its objective. This is not a promotion hour except as soul winning is promoted. Do not cheapen it in any way. Do not show self or pride; be humble.

"We are not in the pulpit to please or inform the mind, or to disturb or sway the emotions, but to move the will, to set it in another course, to increase its pace and to make it sing in the way of God's commandments. To bring the wills of men into tune with the will of God" (*The Preacher, His Life and Work*, p. 172).

Restrict the sermon to a reasonable length. Thirty to forty minutes is usually ample time. This is the climax of the act of worship. Happy is the person

who is able to lead the people to the water of life and cause them to drink, whose heart is so full of worship and love for God that they can inspire the people and bring them into a closer fellowship with their Saviour.

Remember at all times that this part of the service is for young and old, that the little ones love to worship and serve God too. Therefore the thoughts and words must be made to reach into the hearts of all, regardless of age, and cause them to rejoice that they belong to God.

The Benediction

The benediction is important. It must be an expression of sincere thanks for the privilege of worship. Be brief and reverent. Send the people home feeling that they came to God's house and have been fed and blessed.

Do not hurry from the platform. Walk with dignity and decorum, and help the congregation to realize that they are now leaving the house of the Eternal One and, having communed with Him, they are now to be living witnesses for Him.

Be friendly and courteous to all as they leave. Shake their hands; tell them how glad you are to see them. Let them feel that you love them and that you are happy to be their elder. And don't forget the little ones.

Blessed is the elder to whom a brother or sister says as he leaves the sanctuary, "Elder, you were talking to me this morning"; and the little child says, "I liked your sermon. It was good." Such words are an evidence that the message went home to old and young. It is better still if they quietly grip your hand with thoughts too deep for words. When people have really worshiped God, their words will be few as they leave His sanctuary. **E**

Pastor W. E. Strickland was president of Kentucky-Tennessee Conference when this article was written.

Christ

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PRESENT TRUTH

"Christ declares, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' If the cross does not find an influence in its favor, it creates an influence. Through generation succeeding generation, the truth for this time is revealed as present truth. Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. This is the means that is to move the world" (SDA Bible Commentaries, vol. 6, pg. 1113).

Does the Bible Give Us a Pattern of Worship?

by Joel Sarli

The Scriptures do not give us a detailed liturgy that we should copy for our worship services. Instead, they give us a spiritual pattern that we can emulate. The Bible is thoroughly saturated with the spirit of worship. Even though we may find few precepts or direct commandments as to how it should be done, we do have clear examples and concise guidelines for the Christian.

The book of Genesis opens with the basic reason for worship: God is the Creator and we are His creatures. At the very beginning the Sabbath is given as a time for worship. Throughout the Old Testament men and women are frequently invited to “call upon the name of the Lord” (Psalm 79:6, 116:17, Jeremiah 10:25, Zephaniah 3:9). God’s faithful servants built altars to the Lord. Jacob met the Lord at Bethel, “God’s house” (Genesis 28:18, 19). He said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not” (Genesis 28:16). Moses was asked to remove his shoes because he was standing on holy ground (Exodus 3:5). When Aaron told the people of Israel that God was about to deliver them, “They bowed their heads and worshipped” (Exodus 4:31). When Israel passed through the Red Sea, they sang a song of praise to their God (Exodus 15).

The Lord’s presence was never taken lightly. At Sinai it caused the people to tremble (Exodus 19:16). The story of Uzzah illustrates the importance of recognizing what is holy (II Samuel 6:6, 7). The Old Testament sanctuary service is filled with lessons regarding respect for the

holiness of our Creator.

As in Old Testament times, New Testament worship also places a high priority on reverence. In the book of Revelation, chapters 4 and 5 depict the worshippers singing, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty” (Revelation 4:8). In Revelation chapters 7 and 14 we see a great multitude praising God with music. (“They sung as it were a new song.”) Another element in their worship is prayer. (The golden incense bowls held the prayers of the saints). There were also offerings. (The twenty-four elders cast their crowns before the throne). A scriptural message is presented as a part of the worship service. (The opening of the scroll was a revelation from God). There is nothing light, flippant or shallow in any aspect of the worship service in Old or New Testament times.

During Bible times there was a constant battle against false worship which distinguished itself in two different manners:

1. There was the worship permeated with low standards and a fascinating liturgy, filled with glitter, as in the worship of the golden calf and in Baal worship.

2. There was the other extreme which manifested itself in the cold and empty formalism into which worship had degenerated by the eighth century in Israel. This meaningless worship is described in Amos 5:21-27, as well as by the prophets Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. “Numerous ceremonies were enjoined on the people without the proper instruction” (*The Desire of Ages*,

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CENTRAL TRUTH

“There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of Scripture—Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme. It is only in the light of the cross that we can discern the exalted character of the law of God. The soul palsied by sin can be endowed with life only through the work wrought out upon the cross by the Author of our salvation” (Ellen G. White manuscript 31, 1890).

p. 157). In the New Testament Christ faced this formal and meaningless type of worship, cleansing the temple, and quoting the words of Isaiah 56:7, He declared that His Father's house should be a "House of Prayer" (Matthew 21:13).

We are warned against both of these extremes. Ellen G. White, in *Testimonies to the Church*, volume 5 gives us directives warning about the twin dangers that degraded true worship in Bible times. Both extremes are dangerous. In our day there seems to be a conflict between those who promote a frivolous and shallow form of emotional entertainment lacking the sense of reverence that was so apparent in Bible times, and those who have fallen into a cold and formal liturgy that has become lethargic and meaningless. We might say that God's word calls for our worship to have form, but warns us against formalism.

Norval F. Pease, in his book, *And Worship Him*, points out that many Biblical scholars see the most conclusive pattern for meaningful worship in the sixth chapter of the book of Isaiah. A youthful prophet experiences worship in the heavenly temple. This worship is divided into four parts:

1. He saw the Lord (Isaiah 6:1). Worshippers should always be made aware of the presence of God. Every hymn, every prayer, the reading of Scripture, the offering, the sermon, all should reflect God's presence (see *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 48, 49). This aspect of the service includes thanksgiving and praise.

2. Confession resulted from the second phase of Isaiah's experience, when he was filled with awe and humility in the presence of the Lord. "Woe is me!

for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:5). Confession may be expressed in prayer, in song, in Scripture reading or sermon. It leads to the desire of the worshipper to pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10).

**God's
word
calls for
our
worship
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but
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against
formalism.**

3. Forgiveness is illustrated in the picture of the angel touching Isaiah's lips with a live coal and giving him the assurance, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isaiah 6:7). Worship should always provide burdened, frightened or discouraged sinners with the assurance of God's loving forgiveness, and a new appreciation of His grace. Every component of the divine service should provide His people with a new assurance of forgiven sins.

4. Isaiah's worship experience led to dedication and commitment. The Lord said, "Who will go for us?" Isaiah replied, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8). The worshipper goes out from the service with a renewed willingness to go wherever his Master wants him to go, and to serve Him with a renewed dedication.

It is true that the Bible does not give us a prescribed order of service. The ritual of the Old Testament varied with time and place, ranging from the vow taken by Jacob over a lonely pile of stones to the ornate worship of Solomon's temple, indicating that there is not only one way to conduct a service. In spite of the absence of a list of precepts on the subject, we are not left without the guidelines revealed by numerous examples of worship given in God's Word. **E**

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THE LAW

"The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, but do not teach or believe Christ" (*Testimonies of Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pg. 92).



CHRIST CRUCIFIED

"Christ crucified—talk it, pray it, sing it, and it will break and win hearts. This is the power and wisdom of God to gather souls for Christ" (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pg. 67).



FOUNDATION OF EVERY SERMON

"No discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel . . ." (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pg. 394).



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JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

"Some of our brethren have expressed fears that we shall dwell too much upon the subject of justification by faith, but I hope and pray that none will be needlessly alarmed; for there is no danger in presenting this doctrine as it is set forth in the Scriptures. If there had not been a remissness in the past to properly instruct the people of God, there would not now be a necessity of calling special attention to it . . . The exceeding great and precious promises given us in the Holy Scriptures have been lost sight of to a great extent, just as the enemy of all righteousness designed that they should be. He has cast his own dark shadow between us and our God, that we may not see the true character of God. The Lord has proclaimed Himself to be "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Selected Messages, book 1, pg. 372).

Biblical Characteristics of True Worship

by J. S. Stuart

Why do people from all nations of this world go to a place they call church to sing, pray and hear a sermon every week? Does worship mean something to the modern men in this technological society of ours?

The world around us is full of wars and rumors of wars. But we are here today to worship God. We have come to this place along very different roads of circumstances and experiences. I suppose that no two roads that we have travelled through life have been quite identical, but here we are today to worship God.

Perhaps the journey has not been easy for some of us recently. Perhaps we have had to cope with difficulties and problems, disappointments and temptations. Perhaps life has been besieging us with its complexities, battering us with its fierce enigmas. Perhaps the ways of providence have seemed mysterious and dark and difficult to understand. But, here we are today to worship God.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE WILL OF GOD

The first essential note of worship and its relevance to life is that worshipers are prepared to accept the will of God.

In Revelation 7 John indicates that those who have passed through great tribulations, whatever they may have

suffered here on earth, have no rebellion now within their hearts. Here in the thick of the battle it may be difficult to understand; but yonder, in the perspective of eternity they have seen the plan complete. For them the Master's word is verified: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt

know hereafter" (John 13:7). And today they know, and are content. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" (Revelation 15:3). Amen—so let it be!

This is a spiritual reality that we have to learn here. And this is where worship can come in decisively to help us. This is where worship and life are linked inextricably together. It can be so difficult, so terribly difficult sometimes, amid the personal strains and complications and loneliness and frustrations

and griefs of life to bow submissively to the divine will.

I know there are some who dislike the very sound of such words as submission and resignation. There is a youthful, immature theology that would banish them from its vocabulary. "Resigned? Why should I be resigned? That is weak and feeble and sub-Christian. Am I to accept the ills of life, and sit submissively with folded hands, and drug my soul to sleep? God forbid!"

"O My Father," prayed Jesus with the red agony of Gethsemane on His brow, "if this cup may not pass away

The four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia."—
Revelation 19:4

from me, except I drink it, thy will be done" (Matthew 26:42).

But we are different. We see some grim darkness threatening, or some potential catastrophe descending on our dreams, and we want to cry "Don't permit that, God! Never allow it. I couldn't stand it!"

There was a day at Caesarea Philippi when Jesus took the disciples into His confidence. His hour, He told them, had come. He was about to make the supreme sacrifice on the battlefield of the world. It was His Father's will, and He could do no other. Quietly and gently, yet firmly and inexorably, He told them what must be. All of a sudden Peter, listening, and struck by that frightful prospect of losing his Lord, strode up to Jesus and said, "Master, this shall not be unto Thee! I refuse to say Amen to it. This shall not be!" And if we had belonged to the disciple group then and in the days that were to follow, I imagine we should have said and done the very same. "Come down from that cross, Jesus! There cannot be any will of God in this. Come down!" And then the world would have remained unsaved for ever. "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11).

And we must learn to say it too. Even when life brings us to the breaking-point, and hurts us fiercely with its cruel enigmas, we must learn to say it too: Amen, so let it be.

Now in worship we do at least begin to learn it. For it is through worship we come to know that there is just one thing needful at such a time. It is to possess Christ. It is to be sure that there beside you in the dark is One who still as in the days of old, gathers the lambs in His arms when they have been hurt, yes, even when in their foolishness they have hurt themselves, and carries them in His bosom (Isaiah 40:11).

O dear kind Shepherd Christ, the darkness is not dark with You, but the

night is clear as the day!

COMMITMENT TO THE PURPOSE OF GOD

Now we pass on to something different. If the first essential note of worship in its relevance to life is *acceptance of the will of God*, the second is *commitment to the purpose of God*. John had a vision of the exalted Christ riding forth to the conquest of the world, and all the saints in glory streaming out after Him on that high crusade. They rest not day nor night. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. For them the divine purpose means action fuller and service grander than they ever knew on earth. "Amen, Thy will be done and help us to do it." This is the meaning.

A preacher, by the sheer power of spiritual leadership, must lead his congregation up the altar stairs to God. They see God and hear His voice and descend again to serve. A worship experience that does not lead to service has lost its real objective. The worship service is not an end in itself; it is only a means to an end. And through our worship we must learn this too. For Christianity is not all submission and resignation. The will of God is not simply something to be accepted and borne—it is something to be asserted, something to be done. And Amen is not always a sigh—it is sometimes a shout:

*My God, my Father, make me strong,
When tasks of life seem hard and long,
To greet them with this triumph song:
Thy will be done!*

Where this note is lacking, there is no true worship.

There was a day when David, having brought the ark to Jerusalem, summoned his people to a new campaign, and told them of the wonderful destiny to which the Lord God of their fathers was now calling them; and the magnificent passage in

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THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity'" (Evangelism, pg. 190).



ONE INTEREST

"One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other—Christ our Righteousness" (Review & Herald, Dec 23, 1890).

LIGHT FROM CALVARY

"Every truth . . . must be studied in the light which streams from the cross of Calvary. . . ." (Sons and Daughters of God, pg. 221).



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BLOTting OUT THE SUN

"To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting out the sun from the sky" (Acts of the Apostles, pg. 209).



FIRST AMONG CHRISTIANS

"Of all the professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world. The proclamation of the third angel's message calls for the presentation of the Sabbath truth. This truth, with others included in the message, is to be proclaimed; but the great center of attraction, Christ Jesus, must not be left out" (Gospel Workers, pg. 156).

Chronicles ends with a sudden irrepressible shout from the whole congregation "All the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord" (1 Chronicles 16:36). I can imagine the sound of that great Amen reverberating round the hills and making the Philistines tremble! If we would only say Amen to our own prayers, which means putting ourselves into these petitions, backing up our supplications with the resolution of dedicated lives; if we would say Amen to our own prayers by thus putting heart and mind and will at Christ's disposal, we should go out and crusade for Christ as we have never done before.

"Thy Kingdom come: Amen! Thy world be swept clean of war and oppression and racial discrimination and injustice: Amen! Bless our foreign missions: Amen! This is urgent. For today there are men and communities and nations saying Amen with all their soul to false God-denying philosophies and ideologies, saying it with a mystic fervor and passion. Will not we Christians then say Amen to the purpose of our heavenly Father until every Christian is an instrument in the hand of God, every Church member a missionary for the Kingdom of Christ? There is so much land yet to be possessed. There are so many radical reformations still to be achieved, so much shame of war and cruelty and poverty and ignorance and racial bitterness still to banish from the earth.

What a day this would be for the Church if the Amen of faith and devotion were really a shout of consecrated self-commitment. Like Isaiah we would cry "Here I am; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

JOY IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF GOD

We pass to the third essential note of worship in its relevance to life. For

through acceptance of the will of God, and commitment to the purpose of God, there comes a wonderful sense of joy in the fellowship of God. "I heard," says John in the book of Revelation, "the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (19:6). ". . . and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia" (19:4). And in

Revelation 7 verses 11 and 12 John writes, "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." The worship of the church of heaven was Amen—but it was more: it was Amen, Hallelujah! For yonder, where they dwell

in Christ, they are eternally happy and all their sufferings and sorrows of this earth are swallowed up in gladness and felicity. "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11). And if we have lost this note—and who can deny that many of us have lost it?—it is through worship that we must recapture it.

Shortly after the end of the war, Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, great leader of the Church in Holland came one night to a conference to talk to the students in the St. Andrews chapel in London. This preacher had spent some terrible months as a prisoner in a concentration camp, and his face was lined with suffering. He spoke to the young students that night for half an hour, and the whole burden of his message was this:

A worship experience that does not lead to service has lost its real objective.

"We Christians must get the joy of Christ back into our religion. We are denying Christ by losing it!"

There was a modern martyr of the Church of Oxford and Uganda named James Hannington. He was consecrated Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa, and toiled there shining for Christ until his work was cut short by violent death. He wrote in his diary just before he died, "I felt that they were coming upon me to murder me; but I sang 'Safe in the arms of Jesus,' and laughed at the agony of my situation." That is apostolic and Johannine—safe in the arms of Jesus, and laughing at the agony!

"I heard," says St. John, "the voice of the saints of God; and it was Amen! Hallelujah, praise the Lord!" And I pray that even our worship here today may help to bring the joy of Jesus back to some disconsolate heart.

ASSURANCE OF THE VICTORY OF GOD

But now what is the deep root of this joy which can sing its Hallelujahs through the darkness? Here we reach the fourth essential note of worship in its relevance to life, the final characteristic attitude of the soul that worships in spirit and in truth. It is *assurance of the victory of God*.

John and Hannington and Kraemer were not deluding themselves with rhetorical fantasies and vague emotions. They were not whistling to keep their courage up in the dark. They were rejoicing—John reiterates it all—because of something which had actually hap-pened in history. There had been an advent. There had been a cross. There had been a resurrection. God in Christ has met the powers of darkness at their worst. He has taken their measure, and has triumphed. Nothing has been left undone.

Once and for all, atonement has been achieved and death destroyed, and the doors of the Kingdom of

heaven flung open wide. Once and for all, God has devised for this ruined world a way out of chaos and damnation. Therefore be not dismayed! You are fighting a defeated enemy. This is the fact that cannot be shaken.

Some fifty years after John wrote his book, there was a frightful martyrdom in the city of Smyrna, during the proconsulship of Statius Quadratus. The aged Polycarp, bishop and saint, was brought to his trial. His judge stood before him and cried "You are to renounce the faith! You are to curse the name of Christ!"

But Polycarp answered, "Four score and six years have I served Him, and He never did me wrong; how then can I revile my King, my Savior?" So they took him and burned him to death in the amphitheater. But the young Church in Smyrna hurled its defiance in the very face of his murderers; for when later it came to write down in the annals of the Church what had happened, it was very careful to put in the precise date, and it read thus "Polycarp was martyred, Statius Quadratus being proconsul of Asia, and Jesus Christ being King forever."

Christ died for our sins. He is risen and alive for ever. He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat. The kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever. He is the way, the truth and the life.

This is the Lord's doing. This is the victory. Surely, then, we of the Church remnant who are struggling here on earth and finding the battle often stern and hard and the road much rougher than we hoped, surely we can lift up our hearts and look forward to the day when we will join our voices with the Church triumphant worshiping in the full splendor of His glory, Jesus our blessed Redeemer for ever. **E**



Christ



THE CENTER OF WORSHIP

BURDEN OF EVERY SERMON

"Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching to supplement Christ, the wisdom and power of God" (Gospel Workers, pg. 160).



CHRIST IN EVERY SERMON

"Never should a sermon be preached, or Bible instruction in any line be given, without pointing the hearers to 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world' (John 1:29). Every true doctrine makes Christ the center, every precept receives force from His words" (Testimonies, vol. 6, pg. 54).

Preach the Word!

Continued from page 10

The pastor and Dr. Morgan came onto the rostrum quietly and sat down. The congregation sang an old hymn, and during the singing I looked closely at the famous preacher. Never had I seen a more unprepossessing man in the pulpit. He was tall, lanky, awkward, and I thought I might hear his bones rattle if there were not so much rustling by the audience. His clothing was plain, and there was nothing conspicuous about him.

After the pastor's prayer and a simple introduction, Dr. Morgan walked to the pulpit, opened the Bible—not a white one—and in a pleasing voice, but entirely without dramatic effect, read the Scripture passage and immediately began to explain it. I am glad that I examined him before he began speaking, for I never noticed him again during the whole hour. Instead, I was utterly absorbed and entranced at the meanings he was bringing out of the treasure-house of the Word of God. It was one of the most thrilling hours of my life. I had never experienced anything like it before. And it was repeated nightly for two weeks.

Dr. Morgan had no graces of gesture, no spectacular delivery, and no eloquence in the usual sense. He used no charts, no blackboard, pictures, screen, or gadgets of any kind. Nothing in his talk,

movements, dress, or manner attracted attention to himself or diverted attention from the Bible. His tremendous power was in what he did with and by the Word of God.

I was in another world in five minutes, not because of any elocution or oratorical ability. He talked quite casually and in a conversational tone, reading with deep reverence and impressive feeling the passage he was to explore. I forgot the people around me, forgot the church, forgot the speaker, forgot everything but the wonders of the world into which I had been led.

When I returned home the night after Dr. Morgan's first study, the prayer that burst from my deeply moved heart was, "O God, make me a preacher of Thy divine word, and help me never to rely on anything else."

Throw away your accessories, discard your gadgets and pictures, discontinue your shows and playlets, stop relying on entertainment and theatrical displays, and get back again to the simple, plain, powerful exposition of the Word. **E**

Carlyle B. Haynes served 49 years in the Adventist Church as singing evangelist, pastor, missionary, conference and division president, and as preacher and writer.



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Seven Facts About CHRIST'S RETURN

When John Knox landed in Scotland from Geneva the news flew like lightning over the country. The inhabitants of Edinburgh rushed into the streets. All business was instantly given up. Mounted messengers sped everywhere shouting the joyful tidings: "John Knox is come!" The whole land was stirred by the inspiration of his coming. It meant to Scotland salvation from the papal tyranny.

To Christians today the expectation of Christ's Second Advent means an end to the tyranny of sin.

To the believer it will mean:

1. RESURRECTION

1 Thessalonians 4:16. Hope for the dead.

Salvation marches through the very gates of death. "Jesus held out to men the hope of resurrection at the last day" (John 5:25-29).

"Without this certainty would be in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:16-18, 22, 23). Indeed, "thy dead . . . shall live" (Isaiah 26:19). The One who broke the bands of the grave by His own resurrection will at His second advent destroy man's last enemy—death! (1 Corinthians 15:54, 55)

2. TRANSLATION

1 Thessalonians 4:17. Hope for the living.

The earth will be gathered by the angels (Matthew 24:31) and receive the "crown of life" (James 1:12). See also 1 Peter 5:4.

3. REUNION

John 14:3. Hope for fellowship.

We are more than ships that pass each other in the night, speak in passing and then continue their journey. We were meant for everlasting togetherness (Revelation 22:4; 21:3). See also 2 Thessalonians 2:1 and 1 Thessalonians 5:10.

4. IMMORTALITY

1 Corinthians 15:53, 54. Hope for eternity.

It is only then that Christ will fulfill His promises as found in John 3:15 and 6:40. Eternal life is the object of our most intense longing. At present there exists a disparity between our reach and our grasp. Death terminates our plans and existence. Only moral aspirations are able to transcend present achievements. What we experience here is only a foretaste of what is to come. Can your imagination fully grasp the wonder of what eternity will mean to the saved?

5. REGENERATION

1 Corinthians 15:51, 52. Hope for perfect health.

Observe Paul's assurance as expressed in Philippians 3:20, 21. Note also that this regeneration is twofold. It involves not only man, but also the earth. The physical creation is also to enjoy the benefits of redemption (Romans 8:19, 21, 22). All things will be restored (Acts 3:20, 21). Only at the second advent will Christ have fulfilled His purpose when He said that He had come "to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

To the wicked it will mean:

6. RETRIBUTION

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2:8. Irrevocable judgment.

Without judgment upon evil-doers God's government would prove to be a failure; the Bible a farce; creation a colossal mistake; and, life a vain bubble. But let God be true, for "whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). That any should perish at all is unnecessary (2 Peter 3:9). But when judgement is executed it will be irrevocable (Ezekiel 18:20, 23, 24).

To all heaven it will mean:

7. CONSUMMATION

1 Corinthians 15:25. An end to the reign of sin.

Christ's coronation and triumph (Zechariah 14:5, 9; Revelation 11:15).

Rex D. Edwards, D. Min., is the director for continuing education of the General Conference Ministerial Association, Silver Spring, Maryland.

Biblical Principles of Worship and Behavior in the House of God

by ELLEN G. WHITE

To the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ's representatives, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defileth.

From the sacredness which was attached to the earthly sanctuary, Christians may learn how they should regard the place where the Lord meets with His people. There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habits and customs of the people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred, things which connect us with God are fast losing their hold upon our minds and hearts, and are being brought down to the level of common things. The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary where they met with God in sacred service has largely passed away. Nevertheless, God Himself gave the order of His service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature.

The house is the sanctuary for the family, and the closet or the grove the most retired place for individual worship; but the church is the sanctuary for the congregation. There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping. Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference. In order that men may do their best work in showing forth the praises of God, their associations must be such as will keep the sacred distinct from the common, in their minds. Those who have broad ideas, noble thoughts and aspirations, are those who have associations that strengthen all thoughts of divine things. Happy are those who have a sanctuary,



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

In this article Ellen G. White clearly indicates the principles that should be followed in a Seventh-day Adventist worship. I urge the elders to read carefully these instructions and use them as guidelines in judging any effort of renewal of the worship service in your congregation.



be it high or low, in the city or among the rugged mountain caves, in the lowly cabin or in the wilderness. If it is the best they can secure for the Master, He will hallow the place with His presence, and it will be holy unto the Lord of hosts.

When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. If there is a stove in the room, it is not proper to crowd about it in an indolent, careless attitude. Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers.

If some have to wait a few minutes before the meeting begins, let them maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special benefit to

their own hearts and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls. They should remember that heavenly messengers are in the house. We all lose much sweet communion with God by our restlessness, by not encouraging moments of reflection and prayer. The spiritual condition needs to be often reviewed and the mind and heart drawn toward the Sun of Righteousness. If when the people come into the house of worship, they have genuine reverence for the Lord and bear in mind that they are in His presence, there will be a sweet eloquence in silence. The whispering and laughing and talking which might be without sin in a common business place should find no sanction in the house where God is worshiped. The mind should be prepared to hear the word of God, that it may have due weight and suitably impress the heart.

When the minister enters, it should be with dignified, solemn mien. He should bow down in silent prayer as soon as he steps into the pulpit, and earnestly ask help of God. What an impression this will make! There will be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God; he is committing himself to God before he dares to stand before the people. Solemnity rests upon all, and angels of God are brought very near. Every one of the congregation, also, who fears God should with bowed head unite in silent prayer with him that God may grace the meeting with His presence and give power to His truth proclaimed from human lips. When the meeting is opened by prayer, every knee should bow in the presence of the Holy One, and every heart should ascend to God in silent devotion. The prayers of faithful worshipers will be heard, and the ministry of the word will prove effectual. The lifeless attitude of the worshipers in the house of God is one great reason why the ministry is not more productive of good. The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God's instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies.

When the word is spoken, you should remember, brethren, that you are listening to the voice of God through His delegated servant. Listen attentively. Sleep not for one instant, because by this slumber you may lose the very words that you need most—the very words which, if heeded, would save your feet from straying into wrong paths. Satan and his angels are busy creating a paralyzed condition of the senses so that cautions, warnings, and reproofs shall not be heard; or if heard, that they shall not take effect upon the heart and reform the life. Sometimes a little child may so attract the attention of the hearers that the precious seed does not fall into good ground and bring forth fruit. Sometimes young men and women have so little reverence for the house and worship of God that they keep up a continual communication with each other during the sermon. Could these see the angels of God looking upon them and marking their doings, they would be filled with shame, with abhorrence of themselves. God wants attentive hearers. It was while men slept that Satan sowed his tares.

When the benediction is pronounced, all should still be quiet, as if fearful of losing the peace of Christ. Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling

that they are in the presence of God, that His eye is resting upon them, and that they must act as in His visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends and visit and introduce common thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places.

Parents, elevate the standard of Christianity in the minds of your children; help them to weave Jesus into their experience; teach them to have the highest reverence for the house of God and to understand that when they enter the Lord's house it should be with hearts that are softened and subdued by such thoughts as these: "God is here; this is His house. I must have pure thoughts and the holiest motives. I must have no pride, envy, jealousy, evil surmising, hatred, or deception in my heart, for I am coming into the presence of the holy God. This is the place where God meets with and blesses His people. The high and holy One who inhabiteth eternity looks upon me, searches my heart, and reads the most secret thoughts and acts of my life."

Brethren, will you not devote a little thought to this subject and notice how you conduct yourselves in the house of God and what efforts you are making by precept and example to cultivate reverence in your children? You roll vast responsibilities upon the preacher and hold him accountable for the souls of your children; but you do not sense your own responsibility as parents and as instructors and, like Abraham, command your household after you, that they may keep the statutes of the Lord. Your sons and daughters are corrupted by your own example and lax precepts; and, notwithstanding this lack of domestic training, you expect the minister to counteract your daily work and accomplish the wonderful achievement of training their hearts and lives to virtue and piety.

After the minister has done all he can do for the church by faithful, affectionate admonition, patient discipline, and fervent prayer to reclaim and save the soul, yet is not successful, the fathers and mothers often blame him because their children are not converted, when it may be because of their own neglect. The burden rests with the parents; and will they take up the work that God has entrusted to them, and with fidelity perform it? Will they move onward and

upward, working in a humble, patient, persevering way to reach the exalted standard themselves and to bring their children up with them? No wonder our churches are feeble and do not have that deep, earnest piety in their borders that they should have. Our present habits and customs, which dishonor God and bring the sacred and heavenly down to the level of the common, are against us. We have a sacred, testing, sanctifying truth; and if our habits and practices are not in accordance with the truth, we are sinners against great light, and are proportionately guilty. It will be far more tolerable for the heathen in the day of God's retributive justice than for us.

A much greater work might be done than we are now doing in reflecting the light of truth. God expects us to bear much fruit. He expects greater zeal and faithfulness, more affectionate and earnest efforts, by the individual members of the church for their neighbors and for those who are out of Christ. Parents must begin their work on a high plane of action. All who name the name of Christ must put on the whole armor and entreat, warn, and seek to win souls from sin. Lead all you can to listen to the truth in the house of God.

All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to Him. The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments is a species of idolatry and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God, where the eyes of every worshiper should be single to His glory. All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject. When they see their children inclined to follow worldly fashions, they should, like Abraham, resolutely command their households after them. Instead

of uniting them with the world, connect them with God. Let none dishonor God's sanctuary by their showy apparel. God and angels are there. The Holy One of Israel has spoken through His apostle: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

When a church has been raised up and left uninstructed on these points, the minister has neglected his duty and will have to give an account to God for the impressions he allowed to prevail. Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things, and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion. They can never, with their uncultivated ideas, appreciate a pure and holy heaven, and be prepared to join with the worshipers in the heavenly courts

above, where all is purity and perfection, where every being has perfect reverence for God and His holiness.

Paul describes the work of God's ambassadors as that by which every man shall be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. Those who embrace the truth of heavenly origin should be refined, ennobled, sanctified through it. It will require much painstaking effort to reach God's standard of true manhood. The irregular stones hewed from the quarry must be chiseled, their rough sides must be polished. This is an age famous for surface work, for easy methods, for boasted holiness aside from the standard of character that God has erected. All short routes, all cutoff tracks, all teaching which fails to exalt the law of God as the standard of religious character, is spurious. Perfection of character is a lifelong work, unattainable by those who are not willing to strive for it in God's appointed way, by slow and toilsome steps. We cannot afford to make any mistake in this matter, but we want day by day to be growing up into Christ, our living Head. **E**

Ellen G. White was one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A prolific writer, she produced more than 100,000 pages by the time she died in 1915. Her work continues as a prophetic voice within the Adventist church. This article was taken from Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5 pages 491-500.

Decision Story

“Thy father calleth thee”

It was the third day of the awful battle of Gettysburg. Two great armies faced each other—the Confederate forces led by Lee were on Seminary Ridge, and the Union forces led by Meade were on Cemetery Ridge. Meade had been appointed at midnight before the battle by President Lincoln. The two generals had been classmates at Westpoint. Here was a battle which would determine the future of our country—brother against brother—50,000 dead in three days. For three hours on this third day, 300 Confederate cannons, one mile away, pounded the Union forces, and the Union cannons were forced to pull back. Then came silence—the cannons stopped. Suddenly 16,000 men, all over six feet tall—sabers shimmering in the sun—began to cross the wheat field—it was Picket’s charge. The Union cannons opened fire, cutting swaths through the oncoming men. On through the peach orchard they came—and finally with a great Confederate yell, they came over the Union wall. But they couldn’t keep their position, and were forced to retreat back across the field. Lee retreated down to the Potomac to turn South. The river was too high for crossing, delaying the retreat. Lincoln kept telegraphing Meade to “pursue the enemy, and finish the war,” but Meade didn’t, which only extended the War.

Wounded spanned the field of battle. There wasn’t much organization, or medicine, or people to help the sufferers. Near to the battleground was a Quaker farmhouse. On the evening of the third day, after the battle ended, the Quaker farmer took a lantern and began to cross the fields saying, “John Hartman, thy father calleth thee.” And then he’d listen. No answer. “John Hartman, thy father calleth thee.” One soldier, upon hearing this repeated call, said, “O to God that were my father.” With his light, the farmer goes by Devil’s Den, then over to Little Round Top calling, “John Hartman, thy father calleth thee.” Then he hears the faint response, “This way, father.” “I’m coming son. I’m coming.” Reaching his son, the father lifts him with strong arms and carries him home.

As told by Elder H. M. S. Richards, Sr.

God’s Living Temple

I Corinthians 6:19

by L. C. Evans

Introduction: Spiritual Temple—Living Stones

1. First, let us examine the foundation of the living temple (I Cor. 9:11)
2. Those who hear and obey are building thereon (Matt. 7:24-29)
3. Every believer is a living stone (I Peter 2:1-7)
4. Christ is the master builder (Zech. 6:12, 13, 15)
5. Jesus examines the material He is using (I Cor. 3:16, 17)
6. Those who refuse to serve, perish (Isa. 60:9-12, 14)

I. Christ will finish the building quickly

1. He will cut the work short (Rom. 9:28)
2. “In such an hour as ye think not” (Matt. 24:44)
3. It will be finished—a part of the blueprint (Acts 15:15-18)
4. Every stone is digged from pit of sin (Isa. 51:1)
5. Every stone must be hewn and polished (Ps. 144:12, 15)
6. Every single stone must be fitted (I Peter 1:7)
7. Made up of innumerable number living stones (Rev. 7:9)
8. Although innumerable—all as one in Him (John 17:21)
9. No divisions—all speak same thing (I Cor. 1:10)

II. God works through human agencies

1. Bible example of organization and leadership (Ex. 18:25, 26)
2. Outstanding characteristic of Moses—meekness (Num. 12:5)
3. God commands all to be humble (I Peter 5:5-8)
4. Paul labored publicly from house to house (Acts 20:20)
5. God sent Jesus into world; Jesus sends us (John 17:18)
6. Jesus’ prayer “That they all may be one” (John 17:20, 21)

Conclusion—Appeal

1. God’s last effort to gather material (Rev. 14:6-12)
2. Called to be a holy people—a chosen generation (I Peter 2:9)
3. Purified by obedience to truth (I Peter 1:22-25)
4. Whosoever will, may come (Rev. 22:17)

How Elders Can Encourage Pastors

by James A. Cress

► PRAY FOR PASTORS

Praying will change your view for pastors. When we pray for someone, often it's our attitude toward that individual that is changed. Ask God to help you view pastors as He sees them—both in the reality of what they are and in the assurance of what they can become by the power of the Holy Spirit.

► PRAY WITH PASTORS

You will change their view of elders. Pastors seldom hear their name lifted in prayer by anyone other than their spouse or family. Take opportunity to pray with pastors.

► RESPECT PASTORS

Pastors are on call 24 hours a day in a high-stress job. Often they attempt great things with limited resources. Many pastors lack basic tools, much less conveniences such as computers or copiers. Respect how much your pastors actually accomplish.

► MOTIVATE PASTORS

Personal example motivates. If you want pastors to be soul winners, do soul winning yourself. If you want pastors to be more spiritual, emphasize your own personal devotions. If you want pastors to manage their churches well, manage conference finances in a responsible manner. Also, motivate by high but reasonable expectations. Set objectives that are attainable but that stretch your pastors to increase their effectiveness and then encourage them in the process of reaching!

► VALUE PASTORS

Pastors are the front-line leaders in spiritual warfare. God's kingdom will advance only to the extent that pastors lead and train their members. Pastors are the key to spirituality in the churches of your conference, to financial income for conference budgets, and

to soul winning for conference objectives. Value their role in producing results that your vision demands.

► INCLUDE PASTORS

Bring pastors into the decision-making process. Establish pastoral advisory committees that enlist their participation in the decisions that impact their lives. Also, include pastors in your circle of fellowship. Avoid associating with just your fellow elders. Seek opportunities to socialize with pastors.

► INCLUDE PASTORAL FAMILIES

One shortsighted leader declared that pastoral families would not be invited to pastoral retreats because the conference could not afford the cost. Unfortunately, you are paying the cost one way or another. When families experience insufficient retreat time together, the costs come in increased medical bills and in broken relationships. Plan conference finances to include pastoral families at retreats and plan schedules to allow time for social interaction for pastoral families.

► STABILIZE PASTORS

Economic realities mean that many pastoral homes are financially unstable. Often pastoral families are one paycheck away from disaster. Resist pay parity schemes that widen different scales that do not include pastors. Seek opportunities to reduce inequity. Consider the impact of transfers when the family must move and spouses must lose jobs or seniority.

► FEED PASTORS

Plan pastoral retreat agendas to be high on spiritual food and low on promotion. Summarize promotional materials on documents and make short presentations—the result will be better accomplishments than if you spent long hours promoting various causes.

► BUILD PASTORS

Take joy in mentoring pastors to increase their effectiveness. Your own capabilities will be multiplied in the lives of those you train. Share resources and provide opportunities for skill-building continuing education. Let pastors choose areas in which they wish to develop their own talents.

► REWARD PASTORS

When you find a pastor doing something well, express your appreciation verbally and in writing. Look first to your own pastoral team when large churches or departmental jobs need personnel. Help them believe that you are most interested in your own pastoral team.

► LISTEN TO PASTORS

Invite their input. Discuss ideas with them—especially plans that will impact their lives or their congregations. Survey your pastors and provide for anonymous responses on sensitive topics to make sure you are hearing accurately.

► EVALUATE PASTORS

When evaluation occurs in a nonthreatening way, it encourages pastors by helping them realize the good things they are accomplishing and their potential for development. **E**

James A. Cress is the Ministerial Association Secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



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Here are some illustrations and concepts on worship.

Call to Worship—The Missing Lamps

In a certain mountain village in Europe several centuries ago, a nobleman wondered what legacy he should leave to his townspeople. At last he decided to build them a church.

No one saw the complete plans for the church until it was finished. When the people gathered, they marveled at its beauty and completeness. Then someone asked, "But where are the lamps? How will it be lighted?"

The nobleman pointed to some brackets in the walls. Then he gave to each family a lamp which they were to bring with them each time they came to worship. "Each time you are here the area where you are seated will be lighted," the nobleman said. "Each time you are not here, that area will be dark. This is to remind you that whenever you fail to come to church, some part of God's house will be dark."

True Attitude in Worship

"They bring their bodies to the house of prayer but not their souls.

They worship with

their mouths but not in spirit and in truth.

They are sticklers for early morning communion with God but they take no thought about keeping their hearts with all diligence.

They boast of their orthodoxy but disregard the precepts of Christ.

Multitudes of professing Christians abstain from external acts of violence, yet hesitate not to rob their neighbors of a good name by spreading evil reports against them.

They contribute regularly to the church but shrink not from misrepresenting their goods and cheating their customers persuading themselves that business is business.

They have more regard for the laws of man than those of God for His fear is not before their eyes" (Arthur Pink).

Come to meet God and not the Preacher

One of the real problems of our time is the near celebrity status of many preachers. Many men are almost worshipped by their followers.

I am reminded of an incident Lyman Beecher

Stowe wrote about in his book *Saints, Sinners, and Beechers*. Stowe told that on one occasion Thomas K. Beecher substituted for his famous brother Henry Ward Beecher at the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. Many curiosity seekers had come to hear the renowned Henry Beecher speak.

Therefore when Thomas Beecher appeared in the pulpit, some of the people got up and started for the doors. Sensing that they were disappointed because he was substituting for his brother, Thomas Beecher raised his hand for silence and announced, "All those who came here this morning to worship Henry Ward Beecher may withdraw from the church; all who came to worship God may remain."

A Great Definition of Worship

One of the greatest definitions of worship ever laid down was laid down by William Temple: "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God."

What worship is all about

One writer notes that:

Worship in our time has been captured by the tourist mindset. Worship

is understood as a visit to an attractive site to be made when we have adequate leisure. For some it is a weekly jaunt to church. For others, occasional visits to special services. Some, with a bent for Christian entertainment and sacred diversion, plan their lives around special events like retreats, rallies and conferences.

We go to see a new personality, to hear a new truth, to get a new experience and so, somehow, expand our otherwise humdrum lives. We'll try anything—until something else comes along.

Come to Meet God and not a Great Man

The following true story is from the life of Louis XIV of France: One Sunday when he and his royal party arrived at church, no one was there except Archbishop Fenelon, the court preacher. Surprised to see all the vacant seats, the King inquired, "Where is everybody? Why isn't anyone else present this morning?" The minister answered "I announced that Your Majesty would not be here today, because I wanted you to see who came to the service just to flatter you and who came to worship God."

Most people do not have opportunities to be in meetings where such dignitaries are in attendance. Yet many of them go to church for reasons

other than communing with the Lord, enjoying Christian fellowship, and being instructed from the Word. They may not be there to impress royalty, but their motives for coming are just as vain and selfish. Some think it's good for business or that it enhances their social standing. Others put in an appearance to display their piety, and some merely attend out of a sense of duty. But not one of these actions truly brings honor to God.

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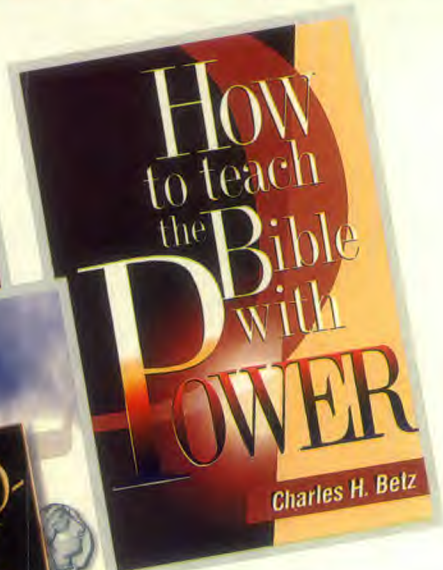
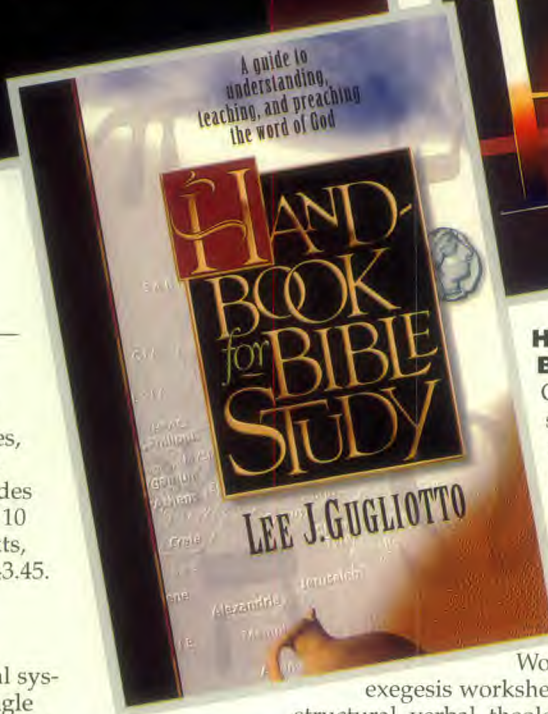
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