

# A Sure Foundation

"One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of All"  
Growing Evidences of the Truthfulness of our Positions

"TELL me, do conditions in the world indicate that the coming of the Lord is near, or have we been mistaken in our exposition of prophecy?" This was the question which came to us some time ago from one of our brethren, an isolated Sabbath keeper, shut off from association with the church, and for the most part from association with the world. He had not come to doubt the evidences of his faith, but he wanted renewed assurance that his faith was well founded. That was some time ago, before the stirring events of the last four or five years.

We wonder if this question is troubling any reader of this paper at the present time. If so, we desire him to lift up his eyes and look out upon the great world. We see in the events that are taking place, multiplied evidences from God that we are living in the closing days of earth's history, and that soon we shall witness the coming of the Son of man. We can say with the apostle Peter, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:16.

Seventh-day Adventists have taken their stand upon certain great fundamentals of Christian faith. To these great fundamentals they hold today with even greater assurance than in the beginnings of this movement. For the sake of brevity we may enumerate them as follows:

1. The inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.
2. The personality and deity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit.
3. The death of Jesus Christ as man's all-atoning sacrifice for sin; his literal, bodily resurrection from the dead; and his ascension to the right hand of the Father, where he ever lives to make intercession for us.
4. The ministry of Christ as our great high priest in the heavenly sanctuary; the work of the investigative judgment, which began in 1844, when Christ entered upon his ministry in the most holy place; and the final executive judgment at the end of the world.
5. Justification through faith in Christ's atoning blood.
6. Life only through Christ, or immortality bestowed upon the righteous at the second coming of Christ.
7. The perpetuity and binding obligation of the law of God upon mankind in every age.
8. The Sabbath institution, a memorial of Christ's work as Creator, the seal of his law, and the sign of sanctification.
9. The personality of both good and evil angels; the ministry of good angels in connection with the work of grace, and the work of evil angels in opposing the principles of righteousness.
10. The nearness of Christ's second coming, as attested by signs in the physical, political, industrial, social, and religious worlds.
11. The absolute certainty of the great prophetic periods of the Bible, such as the 2300 days, beginning in 457 B. C. and ending in 1844 A. D.; and the 1260 days, beginning in 538 A. D. and ending in 1798.
12. The objective application to our own day and generation, of the leading prophecies contained in the books of Daniel and the Revelation.
13. The church-and-state movement which is to arise in the United States, represented by the symbol of the two-horned beast of Revelation 13, the enforcement by law of the counterfeit Sabbath, and the warning of the threefold message of Revelation 14: 6-12.
14. The restoration of the spiritual domination of the Papacy, as indicated in the healing of the deadly wound.

15. The total separation of church and state.
16. The principles of Christian temperance and healthful living.
17. The resurrection at the last great day — of the righteous unto life eternal and of the wicked as subjects of the second death.
18. The eternal inheritance of the saints in the earth made new, and the final destruction of the impenitent in the lake of fire.
19. The perpetuity of spiritual gifts which Christ has set in his church.
20. The Bible plan of gospel support as represented in the payment of a tithe of the income.

Seventh-day Adventists hold to these great main pillars of Christian faith more firmly today than ever before. There is found in their teaching no weakness or wavering. There may be minor details upon which there are differences of opinion. This has always been true. But it is safe to say that regarding the fundamental principles of this message there is less divergence of opinion today than in past years. This denomination possesses a oneness of faith and a oneness of purpose the world over.

Through the years many efforts have been made to disrupt this movement, and to bring in corrupting and pernicious errors. These, we are glad to say, have signally failed in accomplishing their designed purpose. We may well believe that similar efforts will be made in the future. The servant of the Lord warns us against these attempts of the enemy to unsettle the faith of the believers:

"I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps,—the first, second, and third angels' messages. Said my accompanying angel, 'Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.'

"I was again brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experi-

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ence. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until he had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform. I saw individuals approach the platform and examine the foundation. Some with rejoicing immediately stepped upon it. Others commenced to find fault with the foundation. They wished improvements made, and then the platform would be more perfect, and the people much happier. Some stepped off the platform to examine it, and declared it to be laid wrong. But I saw that nearly all stood firm upon the platform, and exhorted those who had stepped off to cease their complaints; for God was the master builder, and they were fighting against him. They recounted the wonderful work of God, which had led them to the firm platform, and in union raised their eyes to heaven, and with a loud voice glorified God. This affected some of those who had complained and left the platform, and they with humble look again stepped upon it."—*Early Writings*, p. 258.

But this warning should not be understood to be directed against those who would search the Word for further revelations of light and truth. We are exhorted to earnest Bible study, to a critical examination of the reasons for our faith. Again we quote from the spirit of prophecy:

"We must not for a moment think that there is no more light, no more truth, to be given us. We are in danger of becoming careless, by our indifference losing the sanctifying power of truth, and composing ourselves with the thought, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.' While we must hold fast to the truths which we have already received, we must not look with suspicion upon any new light that God may send."—*Gospel Workers*, new edition, p. 310.

"Some have feared that if in even a single point they acknowledge themselves in error, other minds would be led to doubt the whole theory of truth. Therefore they have felt that investigation should not be permitted; that it would tend to dissension and disunion. But if such is to be the result of investigation, the sooner it comes the better. If there are those whose faith in God's Word will not stand the test of an investigation of the Scriptures, the sooner they are revealed the better; for then the way will be opened to show them their error. We cannot hold that a position once taken, an idea once advocated, is not, under any circumstances, to be relinquished. There is but one who is infallible,—He who is the way, the truth, and the life."—*Gospel Workers*, old edition, p. 125.

We need to heed this counsel. Many in the church are not students of the Word. They know not the reasons for the faith they profess. Failing to obtain this knowledge, they will go down before the onslaughts of infidelity in the days before us.

Much depends upon the attitude of the Bible student as to his relation to accepted truth. If he studies to build up, to strengthen, to establish, his conclusions will be quite different, in all likelihood, than if he studies to disprove and tear down the positions held by his brethren. One who searches the Word and ways of God to find errors, weakness, and unjust dealings, will imagine he finds that for which he looks. On the other hand, he who with reverent heart seeks to find the true way, and who, wherein he cannot see clearly the justice of divine dealing, is willing to trust the infinite wisdom and love of the great Father, will be rightly guided. The psalmist says:

"With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt show thyself upright; with the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward." Ps. 18: 25, 26.

Every student of the Word, in all his investigations, should definitely settle at the outset that there are certain fundamental principles which, in his investigation, he should not discredit. With this as a foundation, he will reject as false philosophy every conclusion which leads away from these fundamentals.

This was well illustrated by Dr. Lyman Beecher in one of his addresses to a class of divinity students. He said, in substance:

"Young men, beware of speculation. Sometimes I myself venture out into the great sea. But before doing so I make myself fast to some old stump of a doctrine which has stood on the shore and weathered the wind and waves for centuries. Then I cautiously venture forth. A breaker may overwhelm me and I lose my bearings. I may not know where I am, but I know where that old stump is, and I haul in on the rope."

This is good counsel for Seventh-day Adventists, and for Bible students in every age. While further Bible study and future investigation may lead to clearer light on the fundamentals, and even to a modification of view on some of the details of fundamental truth, we cannot conceive that such study will truly lead us to positions which would nullify or set aside the great fundamental principles upon which this movement is based. Sometimes, it is to be regretted, minor details of truth, on which there may be honest differences of opinion, are taken out of their normal setting and magnified to greater proportions than the great truth of which they are a part. Let us be careful to distinguish between important and unimportant issues.

The apostle admonishes the believers in this day:

"Cast not away therefore your confidence. . . . For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Heb. 10: 35-38.

The Lord knew that in such an hour as this some would be tempted to cast their faith from them; they would stand doubting and wavering. To these he sends this admonition. It is for us to cherish faith in God and in his Word, and never to doubt nor fear.

There are some things we may not understand. We may not clearly discern at all times God's leadings. These things may seem to furnish occasion for doubt, if this is the spirit which we desire to cherish. But contrasted with these are the multiplied evidences which God has given us upon which to base faith and hope and courage. The message of truth will triumph in the end. May it be so wrought into our lives that when it triumphs we shall triumph with it.

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. 2: 19.

F. M. W.

## Walking in the Light

N. D. ANDERSON

"BEHOLD, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." Isa. 60: 2.

In this darkness which is pressing so closely about us during these last hours of the night of sin,—and it is always darkest just before the dawn,—it behooves us to have a sure light by which to walk, a lamp for our feet that will not be blown out by any "wind of doctrine." And we have this lamp in the Word of God. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet." Ps. 119: 105.

Yet it is a lamp that each must carry for himself. Have you ever lighted your way on a dark night by means of a lantern which you carried in your hand? Beyond its circle of light all was pitchy blackness, but as you pressed forward step by step, step by step, that pitchy blackness gave way before the light that you were carrying. So we must carry God's Word in our own hearts if we expect it to light our way along the narrow path that leads to salvation.

Rome, Ga.