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VICTORIOUS LIFE ELLEN WHITE.

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If we would labor to repress sinful thoughts and feelings, giving them no expression in words or actions, Satan would be defeated. [Mar 22, 1887].

We talk too much about the power of Satan. It is true that Satan is a powerful being; but I thank God for the mighty Saviour who cast the evil one from heaven... Why not talk of Jesus? Why not think of His power and His love. Satan is pleased to have us magnify his power. Hold up Jesus, meditate upon Him, and by beholding, you will become changed into His image. [Mar 19, 1889].

If Satan can succeed in leading man to place value upon his own works as works of merit and righteousness, he knows that he can overcome him by his temptations and make him his victim and prey. [Sept. 3, 1889].

From the light that God has given me, I know that there might have been twenty-fold more accomplished than has been accomplished, if the workers had sought God for strength and support instead of depending so much upon man. [June 18, 1889].

When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God the Power of the evil is broken; for Satan can not abide near the soul that draws nigh unto God. [Dec 3, 1889].

The request "will you pray for me?" has become simply a form of speech; you should pray to God for yourself, believing that He listens to every word you utter. [Aug. 26, 1890].

If you will find voice and time to pray, God will find time and voice to answer. [April 1, 1890].

Prayer in secret, prayer while the hands are engaged in labor, prayer while walking by the way, prayer in the night season, the hearts desires ever ascending to God. -This is our only safety. In this manner Enoch walked with God. [Nov. 8, 1889].

Just as soon as there is diligent study of the Bible, we shall not fail to note a marked difference in the character of the people of God. [April 9, 1889].

When you open the Bible, if you are transgressing the law of God, it will seem that all the threatenings of wrath are for your case. [Mar. 19, 1889].

The example of an energetic person is far-reaching; he has an electric power over others. He meets obstacles in his work; but he has the push in him, and instead of allowing his way to be hedged up, he breaks down every barrier [April 6, 1886].

It is not the greatness of the effort but the unconquerable persistence, that wins. [Oct. 14, 1884].

Come into harmony with your brethren. Speak well of them. Throw out no unfavorable hints, no suggestions that will awaken distrust in the minds of others... Some pride themselves on being outspoken, blunt, and rough, and they call this frankness; but it is not rightly named, it is selfishness of the deepest dye. [April 29, 1884].

They are always dissatisfied. Their work is too hard, they are not appreciated, or they do not receive sufficient compensation. If anything crosses their track they draw back like pettish children, forgetting that as Christ's servants they should not be affected by the course of any man. This savors of Satan, and those who manifest it are in every sense under his control. [Nov. 20, 1884].

You should not encourage a feeling of sympathy and pity for yourself... We must bear this part continually that the hand of Jesus reaches over every one of His sincere followers, and every blow that is aimed at you to injure you, wounds the hand of Jesus that covers you [March 29, 1887].

There are many who claim that the Lord is their source of strength; and yet as soon as trials come upon them, instead of seeking the Lord in prayer, they go to some poor, fallible mortal like themselves, for sympathy and counsel... They are making flesh their arm; and as certainly as they do this, they will become weak. [April 16, 1889].

To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few, - this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their from their treason. [Jan. 11, 1887].



Brethren; Gowie, Escobar, Grant.
Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Love Story

Millions of love stories which start out so beautifully end up in broken hearts, separation and divorce - even in hatred. Yet among all the love stories which are events in real life or in the imagination of writers there is one true love story that has a happy ending. It is the love story between Christ and His church. It is the most touching and the most beautiful story ever seen or heard. What makes it even more special is that it is OUR LOVE STORY. This story starts beautifully, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "So God created man in His own image" and it continues, "everything He made, and behold it was very good." Everything was beautiful and lovely. The earth was covered with flowers, trees, and clear rivers. The first human pair were happy and often the Lord came to visit them.

Then something happened and broke this happiness. They found another lover - Satan. It was a thrilling and exciting experience to them. Something that God had kept away from them, their new lover gave them freely of the forbidden fruit. They felt and imagined themselves entering upon a higher state of existence and into a new freedom. Solomon writes "The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul." Prov. 13:19.

Now man was drawn into a struggle between two lovers. Christ still loved them offering to help them and to save them from their friendship with Satan. But at the same time, Satan offered them all that fallen human nature could desire. He offered to gratify their now perverted appetite, all the desires of their flesh, the lusts of the eyes and ears. This all seemed so fascinating and exciting that they decided to join with Satan and to break the relationship with God.

In vain Christ offered His blessings and His salvation; no one was interested at one time except the family of Noah. "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded;" Prov. 1:24. "...Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return to me, said the Lord." Jer. 3:1. But how did His people regard these tender invitations and calls of the Lord. "...She went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the Lord." Hosea 2:13.

But the Lord did not give up easily. His heart still filled with love towards His unfaithful wife, He sent love letters and tender calls to her. "Turn, o backsliding children saith the Lord; for I am married unto you.." Jer. 3:14. Therefore legally we belong together. As the years went by and the centuries passed, constantly Christ sent to them messages, presents, and tokens of His love. But his people did not respond to His appeals. They went and "wasted His substance with riotous living." Luke 15:13.

As a climax of His love Christ offered His own life as a gift to His wife. "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; . Eph. 5:25. When giving the supreme sacrifice, by carrying His cross to Calvary, where was the object of His love? There was none by Him at that moment, no one expressed their gratitude for His gift. Alone He carried the cross and gave His life to save the one whom He loved so much.

When someone shall ask Him. "What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Zech.13:6. It was His friends, His own people who wounded Him. It was His own church which hated Him.

Now 6000 years have passed and Christ is still stretching out His arms towards His people. He is knocking at the hearts doors begging for entrance. Many have started out to follow Christ eagerly but sadly we find that it often lasts only a while. The first love grows cold and dies. What killed the first love? "Because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24:12.

Again it is sin that kills love towards God. Just like in the garden of Eden. The other lover, Satan, is drawing multitudes to himself. As Jesus wept over Jerusalem 2000 years ago, He is weeping over His professed followers today. Why do they love the world? What more can I give them to prove my love?

Satan is laughing at the pain and sorrow of Jesus, as professed Christians bow to him in obedience and turn their backs to Jesus, leaving Him alone with out-stretched arms.

So far this has been a sad love story between Christ and His church - so one-sided. On the other side, it has included so much unfaithfulness, so much pretension, and hypocrisy. There was so little loyalty, love and sacrifice. Yet this is OUR LOVE STORY.

When Christ comes to you personally and asks, "Lovest thou me more than these?" What is your answer? It depends on you to put a happy ending on this love story. Will you answer, "Yes, Lord, I love thee?" Will you also prove your love by faithful service to Him, who valued you more than all the treasures of the world?

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

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After over 40 years of separation these "two Reform churches" met at the General Conference level to find out whether there was a possibility for unity between them. Peace committees were chosen on both sides and several weeks were spent examining the doctrines of both churches and their histories to establish the cause of their separation and to find the guilty party. The following confessions were made and written out.

"We recognize that the walking out of the delegates from the meeting room, in protest, in the morning of May 20, 1951, should not have happened."

"We regret that the eleven delegates took organizational steps hastily."

Prior to that, these committees agreed to and signed the "Reisenbach Accord" which contains the confession:

"We recognize that the Principles of Faith of 1925 were not changed."

In essence these confessions effectively acknowledge that the separation happened without an apostasy. A new movement was created without a valid reason.

"God has ordained that the representatives from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority" [Test. Vol, 9. Pg 260]. The General Conference functions by the majority. Every issue is decided by voting; Therefore 14 out voted 11.

It has been established that only one of these two churches can be the original reformation and the other, a man-made church which does not bear divine credentials.

The last part of the work in which the peace committees engaged was: how to unite and here is where the difficulty arose. A proposal was made that both reform churches should be dissolved. A new church would be established under a new name and with a new registration with the governments. This would also mean that the original Reformation which God had established would be dissolved, and we would also be adding a new angel to the Revelation prophesy. There would also be established three reform churches as all members would not leave their existing churches, but would continue in them.

What is then the answer to this problem? Is it not to study the history and the Prophecy individually with prayer and without prejudice and establish in our own minds which one of these two reformations is the original and take our stand with it. Then it becomes our duty to invite the lost sheep back into the fold.

There is no confusion with God, the confusion is with men. As we pray and study to know the will of God confusion will be removed and a clear voice will be heard saying; "This is the way walk ye in it." Isa. 30:21.

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The true Christmas spirit is orgiastic materialism

Old pagan festival
marking winter solstice
predates Christianity

by Stephen Roney

This, as every Christmas season, we all can expect to hear The Sermon. The one about remembering, amidst all the consumerism and demands for cartoon-celebrity-endorsed products, the "true meaning" of Christmas.

Usually, this supposes that Christmas has something to do with Christianity, in its origins or as a moral creed. It supposes conspicuous consumption is a modern gloss. It supposes, even if denominational, that Christmas has to do with peace on earth and goodwill toward, er, persons.

Not so. The Romans, at Saturnalia, already exchanged presents. In medieval England, Yule was a drunken revel; the face of the Father Christmas was ruddy less from the cold than from the contents of the wassail bowl.

The date Dec. 25, bears no relation to the biography of Jesus, the time and season of whose birth are unknown. It became the Christ's birth in the fourth century because it already was celebrated as the birth of the sun-*natus solis invictus*.

It was, in brief, according to the Julian calendar, the night of the winter solstice, the time of darkness's triumph but also the moment from which to date the re-growth of the child-weak day. The Eastern calendar placed the solstice on Jan. 6; accordingly, that day was Christmas. The two traditions finally were reconciled by inventing the feast of Epiphany.

At first, there was much resistance; many denounced the new holiday as thinly disguised sun-worship. As late as

1647, Christmas was banned by Britain's Puritan Parliament as pagan. The ban was so effective in Calvinist Scotland as to transfer all the pagan magic of Christmas to New Year's Eve, *Hegmanay*, even to this day.

While the celebration of the solstice is universal, it is most vigorous in northern lands where the darkness and cold of winter are renounced. The Venerable Bede saw the Angli exchange gifts on Dec. 25 well before Christianization. Dragging home an evergreen to mark the solstice is an ancient custom in Japan.

And what of that mysterious figure, Santa Claus, who dominates the holiday festivities as Jesus never has?

We know the official story: he is a folklorized St. Nicholas. But this is an evasion. We know of this Nicholas naught but that he was bishop of a town in fourth century Asia Minor. How does he gain such prominence?

There is no certainty in such matters but early on it seems likely there developed a confusion of this worthy with a northern European of similar title. He appears in common folklore and in such early writings as *Beowulf*: now Nick, now Nickel, now Nikker. He is said to be a "demon" or "the evil spirit of the North," or "the name of Odin, as the ... evil principle."

Descriptions show him, when humanoid, as an aged creature with a flowing white beard.

By the 16 century, the term had become more specific, Christianized: "Old Nick," or even "St. Nicholas," meant the devil proper.

That jolly old elf we love hides such a character flaw should not surprise. It is common to mute the terror of the supernatural by euphemism. The bloody Furies of Greek mythology were calmly worshipped as "the bountiful ones."

As long ago as Isaiah, the devil's throne was in the north (see Isaiah 14:13). The devil is prince of darkness, as Jesus is the reborn light. Thus Satan presides over the winter dark. It is he who holds power on midwinter night, even if it implies his eventual overthrow. It is he who must be propitiated, and not trifled with by too much attention to his successor.

Although much tradition places hell underground, eloquent voices have put it in the far north, including St. Bonaventure and the oldest morality plays. Many put it at the North Pole. Others argue for Iceland or Lapland.

The latter party holds that the devil drives a team of reindeer. He is often covered in red fur, as in both Santa and his German predecessor *Pelznickel* ("furry devil"). If Lucifer is often black with soot, it is from climbing down chimneys, attracted by his element below. If he carries a sack, it is not for party favors but for the abduction of bad little girls and boys; Dutch children still fear such kidnappings. Food and wine, if not milk and cookies, are left out for his debauched pleasure as a bribe to leave the house in peace.

All this may be a memory of blood sacrifice to Kronos, Wotan or Saturn, all of whom presided over the feast. Often a child was slaughtered, a decoy for the newborn sun. Is it significant that St. Nicholas is symbolized by three severed children's heads?

So there you have it: Christmas is the pagan festival of the birth of the sun; its deepest, original meaning is an orgiastic materialism, and Santa Claus is the devil himself.

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HOME LIFE SEMINAR IN TORONTO

In the afternoon and evening of Sabbath, November 26, We were privileged to have lectures on the family by Sister Marianne Myhre.

The first part was on Prov. 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." It was agreed that this verse consists of a command binding upon all parents, as well as a promise of success from the Creator himself. Brought out were the reasons for the all too common failure of parents to realize the promise. Then we discussed the meaning of the word "train", and the goals that parents need to keep before them. Finally, there were practical suggestions, which have proven successful over many years, on how to go about training children.

The second lecture, based on Ex. 20:5-8, dealt with the natural way sin places a curse upon families, plunging the family into misery (usually in the form of loss of love relationships, poverty, crime and/or insanity) for 3 to 4 generations, and how God is merciful to promptly break that curse in any family that will turn fully to Him.

We finished with a short question and answer period.

MISSIONARY REPORT FROM CAMEROON (AFRICA)

November 2, 1994

After a night in a hotel, the Lord helped me to decide to travel 150km to Kumba, the primary known address. By a series of extraordinary circumstances, the first person contacted was Tani Aaron Fru, an adventist who was willing to receive me because my card said "Reform". His was a story like our brothers of World War 1.

Brother Aaron brought the adventist to his english speaking S.W. Province of Cameroon about 20 years ago. He has started many churches in this part of the country and has been primary in winning hundreds to the faith. He studies thoroughly with the souls, usually more than nine months, before they are baptized. He never had contact with "The Reform" before my coming, although he had heard that there was some kind of movement for reform which upheld the teaching of the Spirit of Prophecy.

My first interest was in finding out why he was so interested in my coming. It seems he and a small group of reform minded Adventist have been systematically persecuted by their former brethren for encouraging a high standard of Christian ethics.

Brother Aaron is a fearless yet humble defender of faith once delivered to the saints. His reward: he has been poisoned more than twice. Once he was taught dead, but came out of the coma only minutes before he was placed in the coffin and buried. In April, 1994, all church properties by the police and turned over to the Adventist leaders of Cameroon. At the same time he and six others were jailed 10 days during which time he was mercilessly beaten to the point he lost his hearing and much of his eyesight (he is now 80% recovered).

The timeliness and success of this trip to Cameroon should soon be revealed. A work was began there with four baptisms of faithful adventists who had been disfellowshipped for living and teaching Reform doctrines.

Larry Watts