

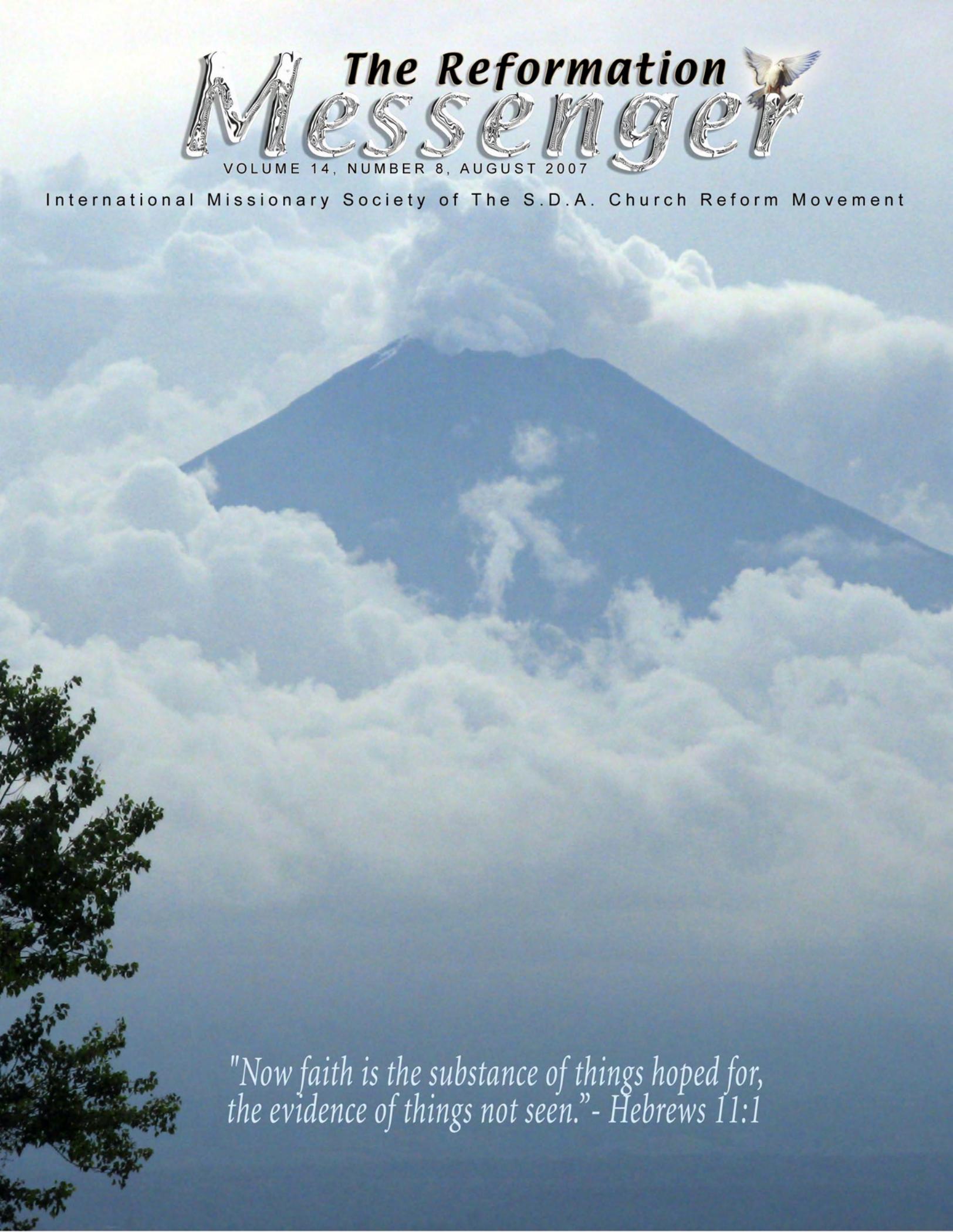


The Reformation
Messenger



VOLUME 14, NUMBER 8, AUGUST 2007

International Missionary Society of The S.D.A. Church Reform Movement



*"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen." - Hebrews 11:1*



We Believe

The all-wise, loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ; He is its Owner and Sustainer.

He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.

The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness.

The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine; the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform.

His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.

Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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GENERAL CONFERENCE WORLD ASSEMBLY

METEPEC, MEXICO, JUNE 19 – JULY 15

The general conference delegate's sessions and the public conference were held in a beautiful area of Mexico, near the city of Puebla, a 2 _ hour drive from Mexico City. The conference site was surrounded by mountains, and we could behold the beauty of God's nature wherever we turned our eyes. Many were fascinated by the famous Popocatepetl Volcano, which could be seen smoking and sending its lava high into the air. Between meetings, many took walks into the local village and climbed up into the hills surrounding the conference site. It was a peaceful and idyllic setting, perfect for turning our minds to the beauty of God's creation.

DELEGATE'S SESSIONS

In the early morning of June 19, more than 100 delegates from about 50 different unions, fields, and missions came together representing 120 countries where our reformation has reached.

The first few days were spent hearing the reports from the president and other officers of the General Conference. Then the regional representatives continued with their reports, which were very encouraging. The work is advancing in many different areas.

Finally the delegates started to give their reports from various countries. Satan, along with the enemies of our church have tried desperately to defeat our advancement, but the Lord has helped us, and marvelous victories have been gained.

The biggest part of the work for the delegates were the proposals and questions from various countries. Many doctrinal questions were discussed, for example the sealing of the 144,000, the nature of Christ in His humanity, divorce and remarriage, and many others.

The most important work of the delegates was the election of the new officers of the General Conference, which are as follows:

President	Idel Suarez
1 st Vice President	Tzvetan Petkov
2 nd Vice President	Parmenas Shirima
Secretary	Pablo Hunger
Treasurer	Reichol Austrial
Youth Leader	Vicente Giner
Good Samaritan Department Leader	Santina Mashera
Evangelism Department Leader	Henry Dering
Canvassing Leader	Joel Barnedo
Publishing Director	Orce Raquel
Engineer for Building	Gerhard Kobele
Department for Education Director	Julio Sandoya
Finance Committee Director	Hans Rekker
Medical Department Director	Idel Suarez
Ministerial Department Director	Antonino DiFranca
Members of Ministerial Department	Tzvetan Petkov, Henry Dering, Orlando Flores, Timo Martin, Larry Watts
General Conference Committee:	Idel Suarez, Tzvetan Petkov, Parmenas Shirima, Pablo Hunger, Reichol Austrial, Anton Salaviov, Vladimir Marinov, Larry Watts, Alphonso Reto, Emmanuel Chileshe, Antonino DiFranca, Henry Dering, Jose Giner, Santina Mashera, Julio Sandoya
Finance Committee	Reichol Austrial, Hans Rekker, John Bescec

The main theme that most of the speakers during the delegates meetings talked about was the message of Christ's righteousness.

Br. Sandoya Paz spoke about the law of God and righteousness imputed. He presented that perfect obedience is possible with Christ's

righteousness.

Br. Timo Martin spoke about the conditions that we must fulfill in order to receive Christ's righteousness. Because many are not willing to fulfill them, therefore Sis. White wrote that there is not even one in one hundred who understand this message, that is so important for our temporal and eternal welfare.

PUBLIC CONFERENCE

MOTTO: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet..." Malachi 4: 5, 6.

Wednesday, July 11

The public conference was opened officially by Br. Cholich. He called all to be faithful, especially now in the view of the coming Sunday law.

Br. Petkov continued with the message of Elijah, who was prophesied to give the last message at the end of the world. Our message is similar to the message of Elijah in the time of King Ahab. We are calling people to make a decision between serving God and serving the idols of the world.

Br. Vladimir Marinov opened with the text, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." James 4:6.

Satan was proud and wanted to be like the Most High God, and this caused his downfall. The most humble being is Jesus Christ. He calls us to learn humility from Him. Even that He created all and being equal with the Father, yet He remained humble. Only the humble are willing to learn, they are also ready to forgive and to ask forgiveness.

Jesus said, "Whosoever will be chief

among you, let him be your servant." Matt. 20:27. Only humble men and women can be instruments in the hand of God, and by then the Lord will finish His work on the earth.

THURSDAY JULY 12

Thursday morning dawned to a bright and sunny warm day. To get our minds in tune with the Lord, *Brother Lagunas* conducted the morning worship. He spoke about strange fire versus holy fire. The holy fire represents the principles that the Lord has given to us and we were encouraged to search our hearts to see if we are offering strange fire to the Lord. The Lord is not pleased when we only obey half of the truth. When we allow the world to penetrate the church or in our homes, and tolerate laxness regarding the principles we are offering strange fire. An example was given from Ancient Israel from the time the blessing of the Lord was withdrawn from their camp after Achan sinned. A thorough search needed to be made to find the sin in the camp and to remove it. If we want the church to grow, we must likewise purge the sin in the camp. Individually we are to search our hearts and ask the Lord, "How many are mine iniquities and sins? Make me to know my transgression and my sin," (Job 13:23) and then we are to put away the strange fire that the Lord reveals to us. "If I have done iniquity, I will do it no more." Job 34:32. The cleansing of the camp must be done in the spirit and love of Christ in an effort to bring a reformation in the life of the offender.

After a delicious breakfast we were provided with a rich spiritual feast during the morning hours. Three speakers continued expounding on our theme about the Elijah message.

Firstly we heard from *Brother DiFranca*

who spoke about the Christ our Righteousness message. This is the grand theme upon which our salvation depends. This is the message that the Seventh day Adventist Church rejected in 1888. "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. 23:6. Righteousness comes from God, not from man. "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:10. It is His gift to us. This righteousness that is offered to us involves, Justification, Sanctification and Glorification. Justification is God's prerogative to forgive our sins, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:38,39. When a sinner deserves condemnation, but is forgiven, this is justification. Sanctification is character transformation, which will follow. When Jesus comes again to take us home to heaven we will be glorified. We need to yield ourselves to Christ to allow Him to do this work in us, to transform our beings so that we can be heirs of His salvation.

Brother Suarez continued by speaking on the subject of "Elijah, subject to like Passions." "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are..." James 5:17. The famous psychologist, Sigmund Freud said that there are two passions manifested in man, the sensual passion and the aggressive passion. Elijah suffered through both of these passions. Every man who comes into this world must deal with these passions. It is often the case that we are strict on others while we are tolerant of ourselves. Freud left out one other passion and that is appetite. A Jewish rabbi once said that there are two reasons why Jews are lost in modern generations. Firstly they don't follow the

General Conference Memories



dietary laws at home and secondly, mixed marriages with those outside their faith.

The Apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to, "Flee also youthful lusts." 2 Tim 2:22. There are three things we need to ask ourselves and consider carefully. 1) Who are your friends? Perhaps we need to change the people we spend time with. 2) What places do we frequent? 3) What things do we do? We may need to make a change in these three things.

Although He had the same sinful flesh with the passions of humanity, Jesus never yielded in even one point. He is our brother in our weakness but did not share in our passions. Christ has offered to help us control our passions. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4. Choose whom ye will serve, modern Baal or Christ.

Brother Sandoya finished the morning session by sharing with us the subject of, "And the Word became Flesh." "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. Christ in eternity was one with the Father. Jesus said, the Father and I are one, although they are two distinct persons. Even though He held an exalted position in heaven, He decided to offer Himself as a sacrifice in order to redeem fallen man. He became flesh; He shared in our humanity. Although there are some who do not believe that Jesus came in the flesh fully as we are. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist," 1 John 4:2,3. Christ took upon Himself

the weakness of human nature, but He never sinned. He remained pure. He took humanity with all the possibility of failure. He could have succumbed to temptation. When you feel tempted and feel that you are ready to fall into sin, lift up your hands to Jesus. He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15. He offers us the victory that He had. He will put his garments of righteousness around us so that we can reach the goal that is put in front of us, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

After lunch we continued with our study of the Elijah message. Firstly we heard from *Brother Shirima* who enlarged the subject of, "The Promised Gift." "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49. "John answered saying unto all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:" Luke 3:16. Baptism by water is an important step in our spiritual walk, but we need to also be baptized by the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost it is recorded how the Early Rain fell on the followers of Jesus and a mighty work was done by the aid of the Holy Spirit. We are awaiting the Latter Rain. The promised gift of the Holy Spirit will again be poured out in a mighty manner. We are encouraged to, "Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain:" Zech. 10:1. The Holy Spirit will give power for preaching and power to witness for Christ. We need to realize what God can do through us. Those who ask faithfully will receive the gift.

Brother Henry Dering followed by sharing a power-point presentation about "Our

Friend." People are looking for friends and they are also looking for salvation in a variety of places. There are many religions in the world who are offering a variety of ways to heaven, such as work righteousness, revival meetings, monasteries, prayer wheels, infliction of pain, mass, etc. there are many more. However there is only one way to obtain salvation and that is through Jesus Christ. Although many things in the world are constantly changing, the truth does not change and the truth is that, "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph 2:8,9. "For God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. Salvation is through Jesus alone, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55:7

At the end of a spiritually rich day, *Brother Larry Watts* brought us evening worship. He shared with us some details from the life of Elijah. Although we know that he was a Tishbite, out of Gilead, we know nothing of his childhood. After his wonderful experience on Mt. Carmel and running for 3 hours in the driving rain, what did Elijah do? He ran. Years earlier, after he spoke to Ahab, he ran to the brook Cherith and then he ran to the widow of Zarephath. After that he ran to Obadiah, and then ran to Carmel and finally to Jezreel. Now he ran again, but this time he should not have run. "Had he remained where he was, had he made God his refuge and strength, standing steadfast for the truth, he would have been shielded from harm. The Lord would have given him another signal victory by sending His judgments on Jezebel; and the impression made on the king and the people would have wrought a great reformation." PK 160. At the cave, where he ended up, there



appeared a mighty wind, earthquake and a fire but the Lord was not in either of them. Where was the voice of God? In the still small voice. God could be speaking to us in a still small voice also and we need to prepare ourselves to hear it. There must be silence in our soul.

FRIDAY, JULY 13

Friday dawned as another bright sunny day. *Brother Valverde* gave us some spiritual food for morning worship in order to prepare us for the day's activities. The only way to know the Lord is to search for Him with all our heart. Our most important need, whether we are rich or poor is to know Jesus. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. He is a God of love as well as a God of holiness and righteousness. Some biblical examples were given to enlarge the love of God. Even though Adam and Even sinned and were unworthy to remain in the Garden of Eden, God still covered them with a garment of love. Noah knew the Lord and loved Him. He bore the ridicule of the world to do God's will. Abraham loved God and when God told him to go, he went out – not knowing where he was going. He only knew Christ; he knew of God's love. Moses knew God's love and refused to be called Pharaoh's son, choosing rather to leave Egypt. Those who know the Lord's love will leave their old ways. "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:22.

Brother Kang held the first meeting in the morning session. John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. Jesus came into the world to save

us from our sins. Adam and Eve disbelieved God and believed Satan. This may have appeared to be a small sin, however it was still regarded as transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). Our forefathers became servants of sin, which would result in eternal death. None of Adam's descendants died this death. Only Jesus died this death to take away our penalty of death. Jesus died under the curse of God. The greatest sin in the world today is to refuse this salvation that is offered to us. God loves you and wants all of us to be saved.

Brother Reto continued by sharing with us the subject of, "The Desire of Ages shall come." We know that the Lord Jesus Christ shall come again to release us from our problems of sin and suffering. After Calvary, He ascended to heaven to conclude this great work of salvation. He is doing the high priestly work for us. On Oct 22, 1844 he moved to the Most Holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to being this work of the investigative judgment. We are now waiting for the Latter rain, however we must first go through the early rain experience of praying in unity. We must reach perfect unity for the latter rain to be poured out. God's people will preach with great power, and then Jesus will come as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Brother Barnedo concluded the morning session by relating to us some of his missionary experiences. He then imparted to us the "Secrets of Happiness." These secrets include, being a loving people, being an enlightened people, being a victorious people with God's help, being a praying people, being a working people and being temperate.

With the afternoon free to prepare for the Sabbath, we met together again in the evening as *Brother Hunger* gave us some "Balsam for the Broken Heart" in opening

the Sabbath. Every Sabbath we should remember that we were once a slave to sin and through Jesus we have been liberated. Sabbath reminds us of the salvation of Jesus. "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ezek. 20:12. Sabbath is a Balsam for us. If we have something in our heart that is bothering us, Jesus provides the balm for the wounded heart. We do not need to carry this burden any longer. There is no wound that the Lord cannot heal. Jesus receives you and I with all our sins and bitterness and He wants to take this burden away. He says, "Come unto me" and He will receive you with an open heart.

SABBATH JULY 14

Brother Salaviov for morning worship gave us some encouragement to keep the Sabbath according to God's plan. Although we enjoy the Sabbath are we really restoring the breach? For God's children the Sabbath is a pleasure and a delight because we are meeting in the presence of God. In order to obtain the true Sabbath blessing we need to keep it both physically and spiritually.

After a lively Sabbath School, *Brother Suarez* presented the Divine Service. "Behold I send you Elijah the Prophet." Mal. 4:5,6. The promise was given that Elijah would be sent. Who is Elijah? Jesus said that Elias had already come, meaning John the Baptist. In the time of the end Elijah will come again. "The prophet here describes a people who, in a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, are seeking to restore the principles that are the foundation of the kingdom of God." PK 678. These divine principles include not only the 10 commandments, but also the dress and health reform, as well as the divine institution of marriage. John the Baptist came to call the people to repentance as



there are many who suffer under the burden of guilt of their past sins. In Jesus they can find salvation.

After lunch a youth meeting was held. We began with several special songs and musical items. The little children sang hymns and recited the 10 Commandments, waving their flags and animal pictures. An illustration was given with a glass that was full of polluted water. When clean water was poured into it, it changed. Little by little the polluted water became cleaner but it needed constant pouring of the clean water to change it completely. So also our hearts are polluted with sin and need to receive the water of life from the Lord to cleanse it completely.

The missionary directors were called together and asked, "What is the most important purpose of their schools?" the answers were to educate the youth to be future workers so that they can spread the gospel to all the world. Young people who were interested in becoming canvassers were called to the front and several responded.

Following the youth meeting we were blessed to have a testimony meeting. First we heard the experience of a brother who imparted to us how the message entered Pakistan. Today there are 237 members in Pakistan. The missionary work is difficult and many Christians are in prison because they tried to convert people to this religion.

We then received a report from Burundi. Burundi has two different tribes and they fought their great war against each other. Our members did not want to participate in the fighting, therefore they were persecuted by their own tribe members for ten years. Some were killed and others lost their

possessions and their houses were burned. Let us pray for our brethren in Burundi.

From our worker we heard a testimony from Indonesia. On December 26 there was a terrible disaster called the Tsunami. Thousands of people died as waves 50 feet (about 15 metres) high entered the shore lines. By the miracle of God nothing happened to our members or their houses. Our churches in Indonesia were organized in 1976 and now there are 134 members and many preparing for baptism.

We then received a report of a wonderful experience that happened in Mexico. Our members were traveling in the back of an open pick-up truck in the rain. All around the rain was falling but not one drop fell on them at the back of the truck. Three members of (her relatives) decided to be baptized because of this experience.

After the wonderful spiritual feast of the Sabbath, the day came to a close with *Brother Chileshe* leading out in the Sabbath closing service. In the time of the building of the temple of Solomon, as they were nearing the completion they were looking for a suitable stone for the cornerstone. A stone that had been rejected earlier was found to be the perfect one to fit in that place. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." Psalm 118:22. We need to let Jesus be the cornerstone of our lives. This is the time to seek out our salvation because the end of all things is at hand.

SUNDAY JULY 15

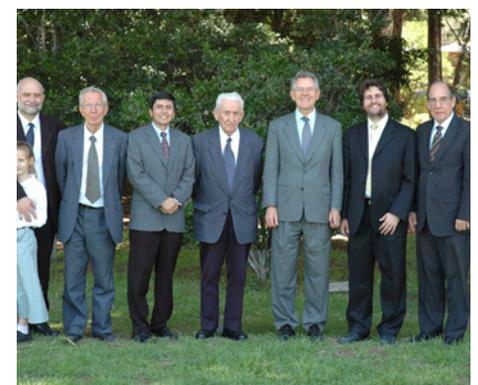
The final day of the public conference had come. After the closing service of the conference by Brother Petkov a beautiful baptismal service was conducted which saw a number of souls from the Mexican Union give their lives to the service of the

Lord. They buried their past lives in the watery grave and came up rejoicing in the Lord in newness of life.

It was a sad time when the conference concluded and we had to go our separate ways, however we took a rich blessing with us. Soon Jesus will come and we can be together forever; never more to separate. Until then, may God help each one of us to go out in the Spirit and Power of Elijah, having the courage even to rebuke kings, to spread the gospel message in whatever corner of the earth we may live in. Then when the work is finished Jesus will come again. I pray that each one of us will do our duty and be ready when He does appear in the clouds of glory.

AMEN

Timo Martin and Wendy Eaton



LAODICEA MUST OPEN THE DOOR

PART 8

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Revelation 3:20

We have seen in previous messages that Christ is calling on Laodicea to repent, that is her greatest need. She needs to turn from her own self-righteousness, which is based on works of the letter of the law, and embrace Christ's righteousness, which is based on works of faith of the law. We have also seen that this change is one of the most difficult things for a Christian to do, because works of the letter of the law look so good outwardly. To repent from obvious sins is one thing, but to repent from what appear to be good deeds is something else altogether.

Some may ask at this point, "How can a person tell what is Christ's righteousness and what is self-righteousness? Works of the letter of the law closely resemble works of faith of the law outwardly. How can we distinguish one from the other?"

It's true that the actions may appear to be the same. But the person who is operating from the basis of faith and the righteousness of Christ will always have the attitude that there is nothing good in himself or herself. There is no boasting, inwardly or outwardly, when Christ is living in us by faith. We recognize that it

is Christ who deserves all the credit and praise. Our attitude is always, "I am chief of sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

So it is clear that Christ is calling on us, as Laodicea, to repent of our self-righteousness and accept by faith the righteousness that He offers freely. But how do we do this? What response does He expect of us?

The answer lies in these words to Laodicea. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). The imagery of knocking at the door and asking to come in is reminiscent of the Song of Solomon. "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh saying, Open to me, my sister, my love" (Song of Solomon 5:2). Many Christians are uncomfortable with the Song of Solomon. Some even consider it to be biblical pornography and feel it shouldn't be in the Bible. But it is written for spiritually minded people and reveals God's great desire for a close, intimate relationship with His people. And that is what Christ is pleading for here in His message to Laodicea as well. He wants to bond with us in a relationship as close as the bonding that occurs between husband and wife – the two shall become one flesh.

When Christ says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," it sounds as though He is standing outside the door to our hearts,

knocking and asking for admittance. And if He is outside, it implies that we are unconverted.

Christ is saying, "I am left on the outside when it comes to your works". That is the issue. Earlier He told Laodicea, "I know thy works" (Revelation 3:15). He doesn't say, "I am the source of your works". He knows Laodicea's works but He is not the source of those works. "It is your self-righteousness that you are relying on," He is telling Laodicea. "I am knocking at your heart's door in order to get your attention. I want to come in and be the source of your works, the source of your righteousness. I want to work in you from within, not from the outside. Please let Me be your righteousness in terms of your day-to-day life."

To understand the full significance of what Christ is saying to Laodicea, we need to remember that the New Testament divides Christians into two camps – spiritual and carnal. Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth: "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:1). Notice that Paul refers to these carnal Christians as "babes in Christ". Babies, as you know, don't walk perfectly at first. They fall down often as they are learning to walk. In the same way, Christian babies fall down a lot, too, as they learn to walk in the Spirit. They fall down because they are babies; they are weak. Paul continues, "I have fed you with milk" (verse 2). That



is another problem with babies – you can't give them solid food.

Now, Paul was writing to the Christians in Corinth approximately ten years after the church had been established in that city! They were still babies in Christ, still carnal Christians, they weren't growing spiritually. In verse 3, Paul lists the problems they were continuing to have – envy, strife, divisions. These things are not the behaviour of a Christian, they are the behaviour of the world.

Spiritual Christians, on the other hand, have not only been converted, but they are also walking in the Spirit.

The spiritual Christians have learned to walk in the Spirit and carnal Christians are still walking primarily in the flesh. Carnal Christians are still dominated by self – 'self' is what the New Testament actually means by the term flesh. As a result, carnal Christians have a major problem: They are poor witnesses, they misrepresent Christ. When people look at them, they say, "If that is what a Christian is like, I don't want any part of it!" They are poor representatives of Christ because their behaviour is so little different from that of an unconverted person.

We need to recognize that carnal Christians are also in a very dangerous condition. It is very easy for the devil to pull carnal Christians away because they are already walking in the flesh. There is often very little difference between the behaviour of carnal Christians and the behaviour of people who are of the world. It's difficult to tell whether or not carnal Christians are converted because frequently their behaviour is so similar to the way the world lives.

In contrast, spiritual Christians are not

only converted; They are walking in the Spirit. Spiritual Christians live a life that is clearly different from the life worldly people live. As a result, there are two things going on in the life of spiritual Christians. First, they are subduing the flesh through the power of the Spirit. Second, they are reflecting the righteousness of Christ. Paul says, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). In other words, the way to conquer the flesh is not by willpower or by human effort alone, but by walking in the Spirit. This is the only way. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Romans 13:14).

So the evidence of spiritual Christians is that they are subduing the flesh through the power of the indwelling Spirit; they are reflecting Christ's righteousness. That is why Paul goes on to say in Galatians 5:22, 23 that when we walk in the Spirit, He produces His fruit in our lives – "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance". But we need to understand that this imparted righteousness of Jesus takes place in our lives only when we have lost all confidence in the flesh, when we can say sincerely in our hearts, "Not I, but Christ".

When Christ stands outside the heart, knocking and asking us to allow Him to come in, it is this experience that He wants to accomplish in our lives. He wants us to become spiritual Christians who walk in the Spirit and who allow Him to exhibit His fruits in our lives. He wants us to grow up spiritually so that we are no longer babies in Christ, but mature Christians.

This spiritual growth or development involves the total person – spirit and body. Paul says, "The very God of

peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23). These three elements – spirit, soul, and body – together make up a human being. None is able to exist independently of the others. The idea of an immortal soul capable of living on without the body is a pagan Greek concept, not a biblical one. When a person dies, all three – spirit, soul, and body – come to an end. Let's look at each of these three components that together make up our humanity, from a spiritual standpoint.

The spirit. This is what Paul calls the "inner man" (Ephesians 3:16). It is the dwelling place of God. God created men and women that He might live in them. "From eternal ages it was God's purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph, to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator" (DA 161).

When God created Adam, he was indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The essence of the spirit is the conscience. It is through the conscience that God convicts and directs us.

The soul. The soul is the human mind, the center of which is the will. It is the soul that we have the power to choose and make decisions.

The body. This is the outward, visible part of our being. Because we can see the body, we can most easily grasp what it is and how it functions.

These three components of our beings have their parallels to the sanctuary of the Old Testament. Remember that the sanctuary was symbolic of Christ (see John 2:19-22) and, by extension, of believers who have



become one with Christ (see 1 Corinthians 6:19). The Most Holy Place corresponds to the spirit. This is where God dwells. The Holy Place is parallel with the soul. Just as the priest functioned in the Holy Place of the earthly sanctuary, so God functions in our souls or minds. The courtyard is representative of the body. The courtyard was visible to all and was the place where sacrifice took place. Romans 12:1 tells us to present our bodies as living sacrifices to God. Incidentally, these parallels in no way negate the truth of a literal sanctuary in heaven. The Bible is clear that God lives and functions in heaven as well as in the heart of the humble believer (see Isaiah 57:15).

With this back ground, let's look at the spiritual growth that takes place in our entire beings when we open the door of our lives in response to Christ's knock and invite Him in. This growth involves three stages in each believer's experience:

1. The pre-converted state
2. Conversion
3. Glorification

The pre-converted state. At Creation, there was perfect harmony between the divine and the human natures. There was never a struggle in Adam between his human nature and the Holy Spirit who dwelt in him. They were in perfect harmony because Adam had been created in God's image, and God is love – agape. God's love, through the Holy Spirit, controlled Adam totally. His humanity reflected the glory of God, which is His selfless love.

Now, what happened when Adam sinned? When he sinned, Adam turned from being God-dependent to being self-dependent. Adam's sin was turning his back on God, and he died – spiritually, not physically. Since all humanity was created in Adam,

this is what he passed on to his posterity – to you and me. At the very heart of fallen humanity is self, or what the Bible calls our “own way” (Isaiah 53:6). God's love is selfless because agape never seeks its own way (see 1 Corinthians 13:5). But after the fall, sin twisted the agape love that was within Adam inward toward self. Since then, that is what human love has consisted of – agape that has taken a U-turn to focus on self. Even in our fallen condition, we possess the ability to love, but that love has become self-centered. Self-love has replaced God's divine selfless love.

Because Adam died spiritually, his children – you and I – are also born dead spiritually. Prior to conversion, we are “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). As a result, human life came under the curse of the law. That means that Adam and his posterity no longer had any legal right to live. Humanity stood legally condemned. Further, human nature became a slave to sin, with no power to resist its demands (see Romans 5:12-21). This is the condition in which you and I and every descendant of Adam have been born. This is what the Bible means by the word carnal. We are born carnal; we are born dominated by self; we are born slaves to sin (see Romans 7:14).

To make matters even worse, there is absolutely nothing you or I can do to save ourselves from this predicament. It is as impossible as it is for an apple tree to produce oranges. The Bible is very clear on this point “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?) Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil” (Jeremiah 13:23).

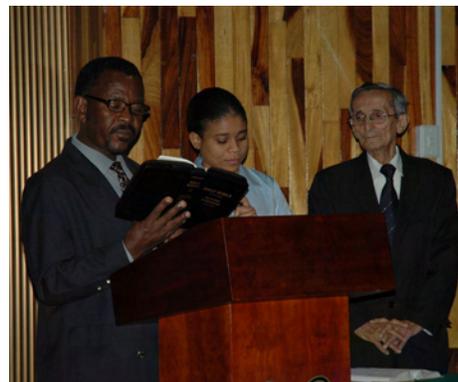
This bleak picture is our condition prior to conversion. However, to redeem us from this hopeless situation, God united Christ's divinity to our humanity that needed

redeeming. As the second Adam, Christ began where we begin, but by His perfect life and sacrificial death, He brought us to the place the first Adam was supposed to have brought us. This is the good news of the gospel.

Conversion. True conversion means accepting Christ by faith as our life in the place of our sinful life, which died forever on the cross (see 2 Timothy 2:11). What happens when a person is converted? What changes take place?

The first thing that happens at conversion is that the Holy Spirit, the representative of Christ (see Romans 8: 9,10), comes and dwells in us. Just as the Holy Spirit dwelt in Adam before he sinned, so the Spirit dwells in us at conversion. This is because we have surrendered our lives to the cross and have accepted the formula of the gospel – “Not I, but Christ”. We were spiritually dead, but now we have been made spiritually alive (see Galatians 2:20). Because we have accepted Christ as our Saviour and our righteousness, we stand justified before the law, that previously condemned us. The question of whether we will be allowed into heaven is no longer an issue. As far as God is concerned, He sees the perfect history of His Son when He looks at us! We are in Christ, and God views us as perfect and complete (see Colossians 2:10).

Of course our human flesh hasn't changed one bit. It is still carnal. Because of this, there is a conflict that takes place in the life of every converted, born-again believer. The conflict is between the divine nature, of which we have become partakers through faith and the new-birth experience, and the human flesh, which is still at enmity against God. These two are always in conflict in the believer. Many Christians are confused about



this; they think this conflict means they aren't converted. Not so! In fact, I would question your conversion if this conflict is not present. Before conversion, there is no conflict, because the human nature is in control. The fact that conflict is present is evidence that a new nature has been introduced. That's a good sign, because it tells us that our minds have repented and are converted, or changed. But because the sinful flesh hasn't changed, conflict is inevitable. (see Galatians 5:17).

Where does this conflict take place? Here is where many Christians have failed to understand the problem clearly. The battleground for the Christian is in the mind. Without the consent of our wills, the Holy Spirit cannot impart Christ's righteousness. The Spirit will never work by compulsion. Likewise, neither can the sinful nature fulfill its desires without the consent of our wills. So each is struggling for the mastery of our wills, our minds. A constant battle goes on in our minds, our thoughts, our desires. We can understand that, because we each have experienced it. I believe Romans, chapter 7 is describing this struggle that goes on after conversion. With the mind, we want to obey God's law, but the flesh wants to obey the law of sin, so the struggle is constant and severe.

To put the question another way, "Can the mind ever conquer the flesh?" The answer is no. It can defy the flesh for a time, but it can never conquer it. That is because sin is a law, a constant force, residing in our members. The human mind, no matter how strong your will is, cannot conquer the flesh. Romans 7:15-24 makes that clear.

Romans chapter 7 shows the condition of false, selfish conversion just to gain heaven and to escape the hellfire. There

is no power in it and no salvation from sin, and no love to God either.

So the question is not, "Can the mind conquer the flesh?" The question is: "Can the Spirit conquer the flesh?" And thank God, the answer is Yes! "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). In this verse, Paul is talking about what happens in our Christian experience. He is talking about an objective truth that took place in Christ. And he is using the term law in the sense of a "force" or "principle", like the law of gravity.

Now, where does the law of sin reside? Paul says, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (Romans 7:23). He means his hands, feet, body, etc. – that is the sinful human flesh. So the law of sin lives in our human flesh. This law is not only a force, it is a constant force. The will is also a force, but it is not a constant force. Sometimes my will is strong; sometimes it is weak.

The law of the Spirit is also a constant force – like the law of sin – but it is an opposite force. One is toward sin; the other is toward righteousness.

This law of sin and the law of the Spirit met together in Jesus Christ and the law of the Spirit won! "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

He did it to justify us. You see, it isn't only our actions that condemn us; our very natures condemn us because they are sinful.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1Corinthians 15:50). On

the cross, Christ not only dealt with my actions, He dealt also with what I am. On the cross, He executed both my sins and also the law of sin at work in my flesh. Hence, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ (see Romans 8:1).

Christ condemned sin in the flesh so that "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). If you walk in the Spirit, the law of the Spirit will set you free in experience from the law of sin – to save you, and to give evidence to the world that you have been saved or justified.

So when Christ stands outside the door and knocks, when He pleads with us to open the door, He is saying, "Let Me be the source of your Christian living. Stop trying to be good alone; you will never succeed, I want to come in and live in you and walk in you". In other words, "I am the vine, ye are the branches... Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Christ wants Laodicea to be spiritual Christians. He is not walking in carnal Christians; therefore, carnal Christians are a misrepresentation of Christ. The carnal Christian is one who hides his light under a bushel. The only way we can become spiritual and allow Christ to walk in us is to say, "Not I, but Christ". This is very painful to our self-righteousness, but it is the only solution to our Laodicean problem.

The unconverted person has only one life to control him – the life of the flesh. He can walk only in the flesh because that is all he has; that is all he is. But as Christians, we have a choice to walk flesh in the Spirit.

Paul says, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he



that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Romans 8:11). Why does Paul bring in the resurrection of Jesus? Because that is the ultimate test. Sin’s greatest power is revealed when it puts you in the grave –permanently. Have you conquered the grave? Are you immune to death – the second death? If so, then you have conquered the flesh and sin. But if not, then you still haven’t conquered either sin or the flesh.

But Jesus has. Jesus has conquered the grave. He has conquered sin and the flesh. How? Was it by His own power or by the Spirit’s power? Paul says here that it was by the Spirit’s power that Jesus rose from the dead. So Paul is saying, “Just as the Spirit demonstrated His power over sin by raising Christ from the dead, so, also, if you are walking in the Spirit, He will be able to overcome the flesh, dead in trespasses and sins, and produce righteousness in you.”

If you allow the flesh to control you, the flesh will pull you out of Christ and down to the grave. You will die because when you walk in the flesh, you are grieving the Holy Spirit – rejecting Him and causing Him to withdraw from your life. Paul warns against this in Ephesians 4:25-30. As long as the Spirit of God dwells in you, you are sealed in terms of your eternal salvation. But it is possible to say to the Holy Spirit, “I don’t want You any more”. It’s possible to grieve Him to the point that He will leave you. When that happens, you are no longer under the umbrella of justification by faith. You have said goodbye to it.

So Laodicea has two possibilities. She can walk in the Spirit, or she can walk in the flesh. Both the Spirit and the flesh want control of our minds. Neither can fulfill their desires for us without our consent. So there is this constant battle. I hate to

tell you, but there will never come a time when your flesh will say, “I give up, I will not give you any more trouble”. The flesh can be conquered, but not by you alone, only by the help of the Spirit you can conquer the flesh, only as you walk in the Spirit.

In presenting the gospel to the Jews burdened under the yoke of legalism, Christ said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; ...for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:29). The Christian walk is a joint effort. That although Christ does most of the pulling, we must do our part as well. Sanctification is a mixture of Christ’s effort and human effort. We must pluck the eye out, we must cut the right hand off if they tempt us. Jesus said, “Strive to enter in.”

The truth is, however, that in this verse Christ was introducing a yoke that was the very opposite of what Judaism was teaching – the yoke of legalism that Paul described as a yoke of bondage (see Galatians 5:1). When Christ says, “learn of me”, He wants every believer to learn that His yoke is the yoke of righteousness by faith alone – total dependence on God both for justification as well as sanctification. Just as Christ lived by the Father, so must we live by Him (see John 6:57).

That is why Jesus says to Laodicea, “Let Me come in, not only to dwell with you, but let Me eat with you as well. And you with Me. Let Me totally identify Myself with you – and you with Me”. He wants to take over your life. He wants to control your spirit, your soul, your mind, your body. But He will never do so by compulsion. There is an important part for us to play – we must submit our will to Christ’s will. That is the cross. Remember Gethsemane? Jesus’ flesh didn’t want to die on the cross. He cried out to the Father, “Please, if there

is any possible way, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will. Thy will be done.

That is what we have to say constantly. Jesus is pleading with Laodicea, “Please let Me walk in you! What you are doing may appear very nice to you, but it is polluted with self. Only when I am walking in you can the righteousness you have be true righteousness”.

Are we willing to repent of our self-righteousness? Are we willing to open the door and let Christ come in and take over? Are we willing to say with Paul, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20)?

When this happens, we will be good witnesses for Jesus; the world will see Him in us. And when that happens, the world will be lightened with His glory, and we will have overcome.

Glorification. This is the third stage of Christian growth. When Christ comes the second time, there will be a change. “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” (1 Corinthians 15:53). The struggle will have come to an end. Divine glory will be fully restored, because the human and divine natures are in complete agreement. That is the glorification we look forward to when Jesus appears. When we open the door through genuine repentance and allow Christ to come in, we will be able to say, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13)
Amen. Anonymous



A MOTHER'S LOVE

A mother's love! Oh how lightly do we often value and how little do we appreciate a kind, loving mother! What a fountain of pure, unselfish love rises up from her generous, loving heart. Who will love us as mother does? And who will suffer work and toil for us, depriving themselves of every comfort in order that we may be well-cared for and spared all anxieties and cares of life? No one, but Mother.

We may have a very kind father, gentle and loving brothers and sisters, and when we grow older and leave the parental roof, we may be fortunate in seeking a kind husband or wife and may be blessed with dutiful and happy children, but no one will ever exercise towards us the same kind, patient love and gentle forbearance as a mother.

How kind should we be to her? We should share her anxieties, lighten the burden of her cares and strive to make her declining years happy. It is a debt as well as a duty. We owe much to her and it is, happily, in the power of all to pay it. Think of the many days of weary toil and the years of unselfish love and patient devotion she has given to us. And then let us ask ourselves if we can do too much for Mother.

A great many young children, especially boys, look on their mother as a household machine, to grind out everything necessary for comfort and welfare. Exempting them from all the duties of the household while they occupy the "best room" deeply interested in "how to improve the

complexion" or meditating on the regular Sabbath and Sunday visits of John or Laura. Such a girl or boy we do not think worthy of the mother we have described.

Ah, children, help your mother! A time may come when you will have no mother. If you have never known how to appreciate her before you will know then, when you miss her pleasant, smiling face from the table and her gentle presence from the fireside. When you miss the soft touch of her lips upon your beautiful cheek or her cool hand which smooths the pillow which is so hard, and that none could render so comfortable and easy as mother—when you have thought of all these and numberless other acts of her kindness, you will ask yourself, "What have I done to repay her for this life-long devotion to me? Have I been kind and obedient, doing all in my power to lessen the cares and anxieties of my devoted mother?" If you have, how much will your great sorrow be softened; but if not, many tears of bitter regret will be shed upon your poor mother's grave?

"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee?" Exodus 20:12.

Many people do not obey and respect their own parents when they are alive; but after their death, the children will bring beautiful flowers and clothes to the valuable coffin and they will put many death announcements in the newspapers and radio for outward show.

"He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach." Prov. 19:26.

Being a mother is hard work. Indeed it is. The labour to bring a child into the world is only the beginning. How essential it is that she take care of herself spiritually so that she can take care of her children! Of all concerns, the care for her soul is the greatest—to grow in wisdom and in the knowledge of God.

My mother, Kelly Ann Chelliah, was a busy mother with ten children, yet she set aside time each day to meet with God. Some days she spent that time in a chair with her sari over her head, praying.

The woman described in Proverbs 31 placed a high value on wisdom, kindness, and a respect for the Lord. Not only on Mother's Day, but let us honour always the mothers in our lives, who share their wisdom, show us kindness, and who seek above all to honour the Lord.

"God bless my mother... All I am I owe to her." Abraham Lincoln

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." Prov. 31:26.

In the third world countries, people are very conscientious about their old-age parents.



They will look after them up to their death. They would not need to worry even one day of the year. They respect and honour their parents in a special way.

Someone has said that most of the beautiful things in the world come in clusters—roses by the dozen, stars by the galaxies, flowers and rainbows and snow-white mountain peaks in profusion—but there is only one mother in the whole world.

During the early years, the mother is in many ways to the child what God is to man. This may be the reason why George Herbert said, “One good mother is worth a hundred school masters,” and why in Scotland they say, “An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy.”

It is altogether proper and fitting that we should honour our mothers; sweet sentiments about motherhood have their place, but this means very little indeed unless we honour our mother in our own life every day of the year, by following her good Christian advice. As the wise man of old said, “Forsake not the law of thy mother.” Prov. 1:8.

The reward our mothers covet is our achievement along the road of life. Yes, we honour them best by endeavouring to build the kind of life that will outmeasure their dream for us.

My dear children, think of this very deeply and remember that in all the wide, wide world no love can be found like a mother's.

*“You may sound the depth of yonder sea,
and count the sand that under it be;
you may measure the height of heaven above,
but thou mayest not meet a “mother’s love.”*

Xavier Chelliah



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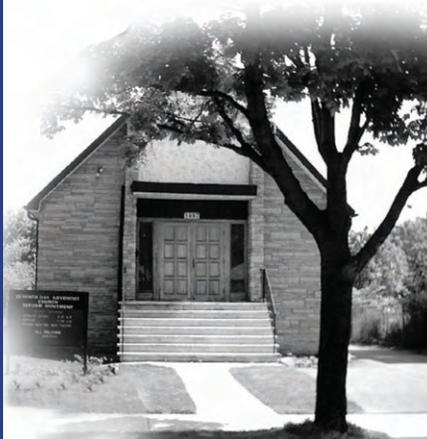
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"ONLY ONE THING IS NEEDED"

And Jesus answered, and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things." Luke 10:41.

Help Me!

Martha, sister of Mary, had invited Jesus to her house. When the men sat down to listen to Jesus teach about God, the women were usually working around the house. They would prepare the food for the guests, keep the house clean, and clean up afterwards. But, Martha was worried and upset. She was distracted by the preparations that had to be made. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" Mary was listening at the feet of Jesus with respect, and Martha was working – doing all the work. Jesus was tired from a long trip, and hungry. When Martha makes, what was by every indication a justifiable protest about the action of her sister, Jesus surprisingly sides with Mary. He says to Martha, "Mary is right, listening to me." This is the one thing missing in Martha. Martha needed eternity, devotion, but was embroiled in all the preparations she had to make.

Worrying

Mary and Martha are here contrasted. Martha didn't stop to think for a moment what she was saying, and lost sight of what, at the moment when Jesus came, mattered most. Jesus knew Martha was worried and tried to calm her. Jesus

then guided her about what was really important, saying, "But one thing is needful: and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:42). By contrast, Mary saw the moment, and took it, much to Martha's consternation, listening to great things from the lips of Jesus. Most people have no problem identifying with Martha. Why? She "worried over many things." Like Martha many are busy daily; running to and fro, no time to meditate on the word of God, to listen to His Word, a desire for eternal life. Too busy! It's a common trait. Worry and anxiety follows. Stress levels, subsequently, build up. (Math 6:25.27).

Jesus makes it very clear regarding His attitude about worrying:

"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Math 6:34).

Stop, Step Back, Be Silent

This is easily said, we can all agree, but living it out is something else! We need to stop, step back, and determine what is really important in life. "Be silent and know that I am God."(Ps. 46:10). This does not come easily. We need to search and be aware of opportunities. Attending church is one opportunity, for we are directed to God, the source of all life, hope, love, and joy, and knowing what you strive for; "the gate to Heaven" (5T491). Furthermore, remember those precious

moments of communion, concentrating on what it means. Also, being quiet in the presence of our fellow Christians, not bearing all the burdens, but allowing others to care; leaving "things" to other people at times. In addition, learning to say "no," but, very importantly, yes to "giving"! "The heart should be kept open by a continual stream of giving."(3T 393-394). "It is more blessed to give than to receive."(Acts 20:35).

Steps To Christ

Martha, furthermore, needed great progress spiritually, the Good News of the time, and the Words of Jesus. God needs workers. God needs faithful believers, God-fearing servants, courageous followers. But, first, one must humbly sit at the feet of Jesus, like Mary and Magdalene. We need to learn to study the life of Jesus, to share with others, to be alert to the teachings and times of Jesus—the Author and Finisher of our Life.

We don't take time to admire the wide array of flowers, the birds of the air, trees, the sky, the clouds, meditating on the greatness of His creation. In one day, the fourth day, the solar system was created: the sun, moon, and distant stars. The Creator spoke the first day and there was light – separating day from night. When the heavens and earth were finished on the sixth day, God gave us the seventh day rest – the Sabbath. Every time we read the Bible, feel as Mary did



with Jesus Christ. When praying, God helps us when opening the Bible to listen to the Word of God as Mary did – to hear His voice!

Sacred Time

Time is precious, a commodity. Time, moreover, does not wait for us. Hideous disasters and dreadful tragedies are occurring worldwide – daily! Lives are wiped out in the “blink of an eye.” Pray, therefore, that time will not be wasted or squandered away on “many things,” on “distractions,” but to use our time wisely by reading the Bible, by listening to the voice of the Creator. It can be likened to an earthly father explaining something to an attentive, listening son. But, however, much more are the precious words of Jesus.

Scriptures Speak Out

Well, we are not indispensable, however, we can gain a new perspective to sort out those things which really matter in life from those which may seem to, but actually don't matter so much, but are petty and a distraction. For some reason or reasons, Martha lost this balance in her busy life, the balance between “being and doing”! It may not have occurred to her that Jesus was only to be there for a short time; no other chance to sit at His feet and listen. In her distraction she may have thought, “I heard this before.” But, we have to be prepared to listen. Some of the scriptures in the Bible may be well known to us, or we “know all about them.” Ah! But, these scriptures speak out to us throughout life, in different ways, in different occasions, different places, different speakers. But, we have to be prepared to listen, and not to think, “oh, I've heard this story before,” or, “I've heard this sermon before.” This is the sublime mystery of the scriptures! If we stop hearing, our faith will become

rigid and inflexible, and it will lose its “aliveness”, and may become “one more thing to worry about.” Consequently, we will regress, harden our hearts, backslide, and apostatize. We can so easily end up trying to earn our salvation and peace, instead of accepting them as the freely offered gifts of God. Then all of this will be one more thing to worry about, and become “busy with many things,” when it is better to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His voice and what He wants us to hear. You see, there's no reason to be “worried and upset” over people, different faiths or beliefs, other styles and traditions, and “things.”

Ultimate Choice

When Jesus Christ visited the home of Mary and Martha, both were challenged to respond to His holy presence. There were two different responses, two different characters. If we are to learn anything from this story, we have to relate to them, and determine which of the two reflects the lives we live today. Is your character somewhere in between Martha's and Mary's? Or, where are you leaning? Too much one way or the other? Remember, too, that “God's work needs the characteristics of Martha.”(DA525). The idea is not to eliminate Martha entirely, but to help her stop being distracted with much serving. Jesus saw Mary's heart... through all her imperfections, she loved Jesus! And He loved her... just as He loves you and I, even when we do something that others may think is “strange” or “stupid.” It doesn't really matter what others think... it's what God thinks! Then the final question is, what direction or change are we going to have... and when? Even so, endeavor to choose the good part of our lives. To be sure, we are often busy living life, but let's try to remember when things get busy, it's still important to spend

time with God. Don't be distracted by life's worries, and the things of the world that aren't going to matter in the end. “No one can serve two masters.” (Matt. 6:24).”But, seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you.” (Math 6:23). Finally, keep your eye on the prize!

Bitterness

Lastly, Martha is defined as “bitterness.” God still loved Martha as He did Mary, but if worry overwhelms you, it's hard not to become bitter. Don't, therefore, worry! There's an old hymn that goes, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus... Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

Great Martha's

Having been raised in a Greek culture, Greek women are great Martha's and proud of it. Gospel hospitality, however, will not allow people to starve physically or spiritually anywhere in the world.

True welcoming is more interested in the “needs” of the guest than the “preferences” of the host.

May the Lord help us to sit at the feet of Jesus, learn, meditate, and live the teachings of Jesus daily in practice, that we may be a true blessing for ourselves, family, church, community, and others, that we can worship and serve by choosing that one missing part - in answer to - **“Only One Thing Is Needed.” Amen.**

John Theodorou, USA



A STEADY CONSTRUCTION

It is a fact that we live in a very insecure and dangerous world. Everybody looks for something steady to hold on to. Most principles have vanished and there is no security and therefore no peace or joy.

In the Holy Scriptures we can always find consolation and hope. In Proverbs 9:1 we read: “*Wisdom hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.*”

Wisdom has built a house, a steady construction upon seven pillars or columns. Seven is a symbol for perfection; therefore, what wisdom has built is perfect and indestructible.

Nowadays, when we hear so much about natural disasters, accidents and everything seems to be so fragile and ephemeral, including man’s own life, it is important to know how one can build a house on firm foundations.

Do we maybe need more cement and iron, a better ground, to dig deeper? How much iron and cement were employed in the construction of the World Trade Centre with its 110 storeys? In spite of all precautions, this building does not exist any longer. The tower of Pisa was not built on steady ground and has been leaning badly for centuries; the Greek temples which were built with so many columns, as worshipping places for heathen gods, are all in ruin, although their architects left a name that has been famous throughout the centuries.

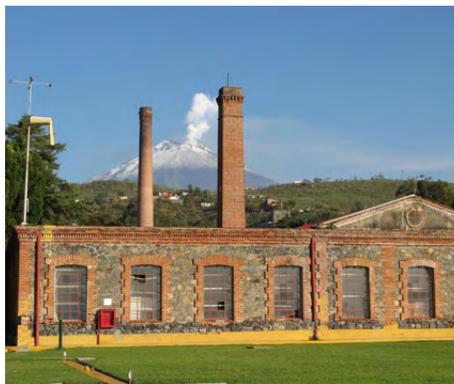
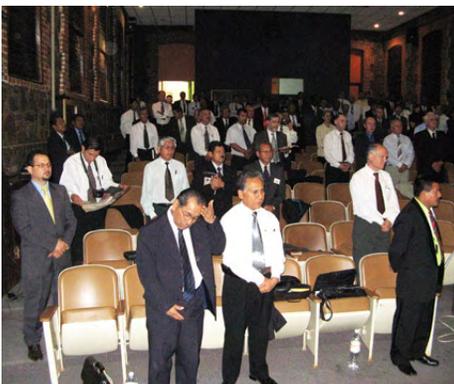
Is it possible that this verse refers to something else, that this house is used as a symbol? If we search the Holy Scriptures we find something very interesting in 2 Corinthians 5:1-4, “*For we know that if our earthly house of [this] tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in [this] tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*” In fact, this house is our body, this earthly dwelling place that will once be destroyed. But Paul, who has no fear of death, says that we groan and have a great longing to be clothed with this heavenly “house” and he adds, “*that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*”

In a previous letter to the Corinthians, he had already explained to them what will happen at Jesus’ second coming, “*Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [must] put on immortality. So when this corruptible*

shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1Corinthians 15:51-54.

We are literally going to be clothed with the glorious garment of immortality. Who does not want to have such a wonderful “house”, an immortal body?

Now that we have seen what this steady construction is let us go back to our original verse, “*Wisdom hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.*” There is only one architect who can build such a construction, and it is Wisdom. There are and there have always been so many wise people in this world. Paul writes to the Corinthians, “*The Greeks seek after wisdom*” and the history of this country testifies to Paul’s words. There is no other country as well know as Greece because of its philosophers. Who has not heard about Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicure? The same word philosophy (philo- love, sophia- wisdom) tells us that these men treasured wisdom above all things. Can even one of these men clothe us with this heavenly house? No, absolutely not. They themselves have turned into dust. So, who is this Wisdom that can build such a wonderful construction? Nobody can give what he himself does not have; nobody can give us immortality if he himself is not immortal.



In Proverbs chapter 8 we read, *“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When [there were] no depths, I was brought forth; when [there were] no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world...”* (22-26). And Paul writes to the Corinthians, *“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”* 1 Corinthians 1:30.

Therefore, Jesus Christ is Wisdom and only He can build a steady construction that rests upon seven pillars. What are actually these seven pillars upon which our immortality is built? What will be taken from us to heaven when Jesus comes back? Nothing from what we have, but what we ourselves are, only our character. These seven pillars are the seven traits that form a perfect Christian character and that we have to develop here, upon this earth, in this life. The Architect is the one who hews the pillars, as an expert sculptor, He uses the chisel and hammer and gives shape to the lifeless stone.

It is said that when Michelangelo saw a piece of marble, he rejoiced at the idea of what he could make out of it. In his mind he could see the finished work of art and worked hard until he obtained the results desired. In the same way, our Lord does not get discouraged or tired of working upon our character, because He trusts His own power and knows well that the finished personality will be for the glory of God.

The Bible speaks very clearly about these traits of character and already in Jesus' invitation to all men to come to Him, two of these traits are mentioned which are the real foundation of a Christian's character. If they are missing, our “house” looks like the scenario of an opera or a theatre, foldable and useful only for a couple of performances. These pillars are mentioned in Matthew 11:28, *“take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart,”* in other words: humbleness and

meekness. It is interesting the definition of humbleness found in the dictionary, “Virtue based on the knowledge of our limitations and weaknesses that makes us act accordingly.” Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to know ourselves, to be honest and acknowledge our shortcomings and defects of character. How important it is to see ourselves as God sees us, to have a revelation of what we are really like. This is only possible when we have a revelation of Christ.

Meekness, in Spanish, for example, is used much as an adjective referring to the docility of an animal that follows his master in perfect obedience, such as a sheep or an ox. Actually, the example of these two animals is given in the Scriptures to illustrate our submission to the Lord's will.

Another very important pillar closely related to these ones, and actually a result of them is mercifulness, a very outstanding trait of our Father's character. It is easy to be merciful with people who are in an inferior situation: with the poor, the sick, the ignorant, but the Lord gave us an example to imitate: He was merciful with a disobedient and stiff-necked people. But, how do we react with people who are proud, snobbish and pretentious? Who usually makes use of their self-righteousness, without mercy? To find the balance between mercy and righteousness is very difficult and we usually go to extremes, either we are too permissive or too hard. Therefore, we need God's Spirit to hew in us this fourth pillar: righteousness. For this purpose was God's word given to us, *“All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

We need to be educated in the kind of righteousness that is valid before God, as the German translation of 2 Corinthians 5:21 goes. The purpose of this education is that we may be able to do the good works the Lord has prepared for us. In order to do good works, goodness has to be a part of our character. Therefore, the fifth pillar of a Christian character is goodness, as opposed to evil. This goodness that we learn from God's

word and that was personified in Jesus is translated into: living for others, forgetting oneself, setting the needs of others as a priority to our own needs, do everything that can lighten someone else's burden, live a life of service and remain faithful in every situation. And we have found the sixth pillar: faithfulness. A wonderful divine trait of character! Who has not experienced God's faithfulness? Our trust is not in our works, but in His promises and His faithfulness! How wonderful is to find this trait of character in His children! How nice it is to know people can trust even in little things! To be and to remain faithful even when others are unfaithful requires not only goodness, but also patience and thus we come to the last pillar of a Christian character: patience. A patient person has all the other virtues: humbleness, meekness, mercifulness, righteousness, goodness and faithfulness. It is not a coincidence that this is the only virtue mentioned as characterizing the people of God at the end of times, *“Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”* Revelation 14:12.

These patient people will have gone through all the trials of the end times thanks to the fact that they have God's law written in their hearts and a faith equal to that of Jesus, that led Him to the cross and may lead them to the fulfilment of 1 John 3:16, *“Hereby perceive we the love [of God], because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren.”* Love is identified with our disposition to give our life for others, like Jesus did it for us. Love; have we forgotten to mention love as one of the most important traits of a Christian character? No, because every one of the pillars we mentioned before: humbleness, meekness, mercifulness, righteousness, goodness, faithfulness and patience are crowned with love, in the same way that every material pillar is crowned with a more or less elaborate capital. *“And above all these things [put on] charity [love], which is the bond of perfection.”* Colossians 3:14. **Amen.**

Teresa Corti

THE BARN THAT BLOSSOMED



CHILDRENS CORNER

“Mother, it was dreadful!” exclaimed Jenny. “I almost wish I hadn’t seen it. The house is run-down; I’m sure they were not warm even once last winter. And there were five children. The youngest being a baby and the oldest just 12 years old. And their clothes, it is as if somebody’s rag bag had fallen apart and begun to walk around. No wonder poor little Mrs. Johnson is extremely discouraged. Her husband, Jim, was not much of a man; but I suppose he did give her a few coins now and then although she had no idea where he obtained it. But now he is gone. At least so they have no coins coming in at all. They have nothing to satisfy five ragged appetites.

Mother Brace’s hands fell upon the potato-pan, knife and all. “Why, Jenny, child, what can we do? Our own coins are not very many, since your father is gone also, however we do have a little more than they do and we can spare a few vegetables now and again, if any grow now without old Jim to work the garden. But we certainly do not have any houses or extra clothes, unless – maybe we could spare - ”

“You can’t spare a single piece of clothing, you blessed mother!” interrupted Jenny. “You do not need to worry at all, but I am going to think and pray. I’m sure I would not feel this badly if there was not something I could do to help.”

With such cheerful logic she sprang up and set about finishing her morning’s work, interrupted to attend the short and simple

funeral service said over the body of “old Jim Johnson,” who had given them such help as they could not dispense with in their square bit of garden, and squandered the money that should have provided for the wife and five children whose wretchedness has torn Jenny’s tender heart.

All day she thought and thought; and, as she washed the supper dishes, she was still thinking: -

“Now, Jenny Brace, what are your worldly possessions anyway? Clothes enough to be a wee bit more than respectable, a house plenty for two, but certainly not stretchable to take in six more, a little piece of garden, and a nice big piece of grass and trees, and a barn. A barn!” she repeated, clasping her hands in the dish-water with a splash.

“Mother,” she said ten minutes later, when she sat on the top step of the front porch with her arms across her mother’s knee. “I believe I’ve hit on the very thing to do. There are the Johnsons in their tumble-down house, and here are we with a perfectly whole, clean barn without even a cat in it. Don’t you see the possibilities? Presto! Change! There is the tumble-down house, empty and here are the Johnsons living in the perfectly whole barn.”

Mother gasped.

“But Jenny - ”

“Oh, mother dear, please don’t ‘but.’ You

know there are two parts to the barn down stairs, and upstairs there are three. They could have a living room, kitchen and three bedrooms.”

“Yes’m,” said Mother meekly, “but where would they get the three beds?”

“Why, I suppose they sleep on something now, though probably it wouldn’t fit our clean barn; that’s a fact.”

For a moment Jenny looked crestfallen. Then she brightened again.

“Well, I can think and pray about that too, seeing that the Lord gave me the idea of the barn. The question is, mother, would you be willing to have them come?”

There was silence on the porch for a few minutes while Mother watched the sunset over beyond the hills.

“It looks like the gates of the heavenly city,” she said at last, “where there are homes for everyone. Yes, Jenny, dear, I’d be willing to have them come, if there’s anyway of fixing it.”

Jenny squeezed the work-roughened hand that had slipped into hers.

“You blessed! Of course, I knew you would. Mother, I’m going to Aunt Serinda about the beds.”

“Your Aunt Serinda?” Mother gasped



again. "Why Jenny!"

"Yes mother," repeated Jenny. "I'm going to Aunt Serinda. There is no sense in having an attic full of old furniture when there's an empty barn just hungry for it. If she hasn't enough, I'll go to Mrs. Squires. I'll take up a collection, mother, a missionary collection."

"I'm afraid your Aunt Serinda will think - " began Mother faintly.

"Yes, I know what you think," Jenny agreed. "She will say, 'How perfectly ridiculous!' But before I get through she will give me a bed and very likely a blanket. I shall start out tomorrow morning and see what I can do."

True to her word, the sun had not dried the dew from the grass that was rapidly growing green under its spring warmth before Jenny was on her way up the neat box-bordered walk at Aunt Serinda's.

"The Johnsons!" pattered that good woman when Jenny began to relate to her Aunt their forlorn condition. "Johnson weeds I call 'em. Of all the shiftless, good-for-nothing lots! They can't be much worse off now that Jim's gone."

"No ma'am" said Jenny; "They don't need to be. They are going to be better off, Aunt Serinda. They are coming to live in our barn. You know we never use it, and it's a specially tight barn, with more windows than most."

Aunt Serinda held up her hands in horror.

"In - your - barn? How perfectly ridiculous! Why, they'll bring enough lice to poison you all. And they'll run over everything."

"I hope so," said Jenny promptly. "Little

Johnson weeds have to run somewhere. It would be better to be over our good clean grass than down there in the centre of town, where there is mischief waiting to be done every minute. They won't bring any lice, though, because I mean to have them burn up all their old things before they come. I'm taking up a collection this morning to furnish the barn. You are going to give me a bed and some other things out of the attic, aren't you, auntie?"

"Well, of all things!" Aunt Serinda stood with her hands on her hips, and stared at Jenny. "If you aren't the best of any girl I ever saw! I suppose you'd like to have me take down my kitchen stove for them also, and send along the spring rocker from the parlor, besides."

Jenny laughed cheerily.

"Oh, no, auntie, only just the things up in the attic that you can spare. You know you'd rather someone would have the use of them than to have them wasted up there. Couldn't we go up now and see? I ought to hurry a little. I may have to go to lots of places before I get enough."

Aunt Serinda turned, and led the way up the stairs without a word.

"There is a bed," she admitted when they stood under the peaked roof. "I took it down from the spare room when Mary Ellen bought the brass one to sleep in when she comes. The mattress wouldn't fit any other bed; so I suppose it might as well go along. There are some quilts in that chest, too, that Mary Ellen never liked. I guess you could have some of them."

"It was very exciting, picking out and setting aside. Just why Aunt Serinda, with all her abundance, had treasured so many old things was a question. Probably it was

because few people knew the keys to her heart as Jenny did, and so no one had ever asked her for them. And it was not Aunt Serinda's nature to give without being asked.

Once started, however, it seemed to be easy enough.

"Those chairs over there," she said finally, dusting her hands up on her apron when the collection had grown to a very respectable size, "they don't need much mending; I guess James can do it tonight. How are you going to get all this stuff over to the barn?"

"I don't know." Jenny paused aghast. "I never once thought of that. I'll find a way, though, or make it."

"Yes, I expect you would," said Aunt Serinda, smiling grimly; "but this time you needn't. I'll have James hitch up the long wagon and take them over when you are ready, and he could pick up anything else you collect, on the way."

Jenny stood for a minute with shining eyes, irresolute. Then she flew at Aunt Serinda, and, throwing both arms around that astonished person's neck, planted a warm kiss on the nearest cheek.

The kilometer down the road to Mrs. Squires' house seemed to slide from under Jenny's feet. Mrs. Squires was round and rosy and sympathetic.

"Why, yes, my dear, of course I'll help. I'm through cleaning, and there are some things I've been wondering what to do with. I haven't any beds but there is a rusty cook-stove in the cellar that I'll be only too glad to have you take. I should think that it could be cleaned up and do very well."



“Oh, yes, thank you,” said Jenny eagerly; “I can black it and all that. And Aunt Serinda’s James will come for it.”

There were several additions to the cook-stove before Jenny hurried on to Judge Beaker’s, following the suggestion that the Beaker girls had just refurnished their bedroom.

It was close after house-cleaning time, and rummage sales had not yet found their way into East Greenfield; so it was not very wonderful that by noon Jenny really had enough things promised her to furnish the barn with a comfort that would seem luxury to the young Johnson’s and their mother.

The finishing touch for Jenny came when she leaned out her window sill to tell the story to little lame Ruthie West, not because she expected anything there, but because she was so happy that she could not help stopping to share it with someone. Ruthie laughed over the yellow soap feelingly offered by Mrs. Evans, and cried over the cook-stove, and when it was all told exclaimed earnestly: -

“Oh, Jenny, I must do something; I just must! I haven’t any things, even if you needed them; but come in please, and get my Japanese box out of the bureau drawer. It’s got my gold piece in it. It’s truly mine, Jenny; Mr. Graves gave it to me last Christmas, and I haven’t been able to think of anything nice enough to do with it. Now I know. You take it, Jenny, and buy some pretty stuff to make some frilly things and some curtains, maybe – if there’s enough. They’ll love to have some pretty things; I know they will. And, Jenny, maybe it will help them to be good, those little Johnson – weeds,” quoting Aunt Serinda softly.

Tears rolled down Jenny’s cheeks onto the shining piece of gold in Ruthie’s hand.

“You – darling!” she whispered, and could not say anything more.

Mother’s potatoes grew quite cold while she listened to Jenny’s excited reports, and grew as much excited herself by listening.

“I’ll begin to sweep the barn this afternoon,” she declared, hustling the dishes off the table. “I don’t want that poor Johnson soul to wait a minute longer than she must to have it all.”

The dust was flying in clouds from the open barn doors when the “Poor Johnson soul” herself came dragging up the path with the baby in her arms and a dingy black dress, manifestly borrowed, trailing forlornly behind her.

“Oh, my!” thought Jenny as she watched her coming. “I never remembered the clothes. They’ll have to have them. I wonder –

“Come right in, Mrs. Johnson,” she interrupted herself; “come in and sit down here. You must be tired with such a long walk.”

“I’m no more tired than I always am.” Mrs. Johnson answered wearily, dropping into the rocker Jenny pushed forward. “I never get to rest, and I don’t expect to. I’ve come to see if you’ve got anything I can do to earn some money. People have been good, and we’ve had enough to eat so far; but it stands to reason that I’ve got to do something for myself.”

“Yes,” Jenny nodded gravely, “and the children will have to help. Maybe your oldest son can do some of the gardening your husband used to do, and your daughter Judy is big enough to take care of the little ones and help do the housework so you can go out part of the time.”

“I guess all the housework won’t hurt her,” sighed Mrs. Johnson, brushing away a slow tear that was stealing down her cheek. But at the same moment a ray of hope began to steal into her heart with Jenny’s brisk planning.

“I’d be willing to do anything,” she went on more energetically. “I’m not lazy, though people may think so; but I’ve just become discouraged.”

“And now you are going to take heart and begin again,” declared mother, coming in with her broom over her shoulder in time to hear the last words. “I suppose, then you’re willing to come and scrub my barn floors for me tomorrow morning. They won’t be very hard, but I can’t get down so long on account of my knee. I can pay you fifty cents.”

“Oh, I’ll come.” Mrs. Johnson straightened up so eagerly that she nearly dropped the baby. “And I’ll get them clean, too. I know how even if I don’t look it.”

Jenny and mother looked at each other and smiled, but they decided not to say anything about the moving at present. Nevertheless, Mrs. Johnson went home much lighter of heart and foot than when she came, though she carried several extra pounds in the way of vegetables and fresh bread.

Hardly was she out of sight when Mrs. Thomas Benton, president of the Ladies’ Aid Society, knocked on the front door.

“You see,” she told Jenny when she had recovered her breath, being somewhat portly for so steep a hill, “we’ve heard about your barn plan, and we thought we’d better have a finger in the pie. So we decided that instead of packing clothing for heathen lands this year, we would just dress



up the Johnsons so they can match their new home. Oh, we shall send something to the heathen lands later; only we thought maybe this was an 'ought to have done and not leave the other undone.'"

Bright and early next morning Mrs. Johnson was on her knees scrubbing the barn floors, little dreaming that she was helping lay the foundation for her own future happiness.

She could not have been more thorough, had she known, much to Mother's satisfaction.

"There's a good person inside of her," was the verdict. "She may be a weed, but she'll pay for cultivation."

It was nearly a week before the barn was ready, a week so busy that Jenny's bones ached when she stretched them in bed each night, but so happy that she cared not for all the aches. Aunt Serinda's James toiled up and down the hill with the long wagon loaded more than once; Ruthie's loving fingers flew upon the ruffles and frills; Jenny and her mother set things straight, nailing and tacking diligently; and gradually the barn became transformed.

"It blossomed like a rose!" Jenny announced joyously. "It isn't a barn any longer; it's a cottage. Oh, mother, it's better than a cottage; it's a home."

Oh, it was very plain and simple; to some it might even seem bare, in spite of Ruthie's pretty things. But to Jenny, with the tumble-down house fresh in her memory, it was all that could be desired.

The morning it was all ready at last, in spotless order with the bright sunshine and the soft spring breezes pouring in at the open windows, Jenny ran down the hill to the Centre.

The little Johnsons were not playing in the mud outside the tumble-down house as usual. Mrs. Johnson met Jenny at the door in a trim dark calico dress that made a different woman of her. Seated in a beaming circle within were the five children, each clad from top to toe in clean, fresh garments.

"Aren't we splendid, Miss Jenny?" cried the little girl, pushing a glowing face out from behind the baby's head. "Ma's just got us dressed up, and we're going to have a bonfire of the old ones."

"It was the Ladies' Aid, Miss Jenny," added Mrs. Johnson almost excitedly. "They've just gone, Mrs. Benton has, and they brought us all these things and more. Did you ever see anything like it? Of course, I'm going to help clean the church to help make up," she added with a new womanly dignity that was very becoming; "But I could never pay for the kindness, never!"

"It's beautiful," said Jenny, "beautiful! I couldn't tell you how glad I am. I'm so glad, too, that you've got them on, for mother wants you to come to the house for a few minutes. All of you. It's something very important."

Seizing Tommy, the two-year-old, by the hand, she hurried off ahead of them, fearing she could not keep her secret if she delayed another instant. Up the hill and across the wide grassy yard she led them, straight to where Mother stood in the barn doorway.

"I've brought them," she said, and stopped, overwhelmed by this crowning moment.

"We want you to see our new house that we've fixed up," Mother explained, coming to the rescue. "Come in, all of you."

Considerably bewildered, Mrs. Johnson

obeyed, shooing the children before her like a flock of chickens. It was not usual for her to be called upon for opinions or approval; and she made the most of it, exclaiming with admiration and delight as they made the rounds of the tiny bedrooms, and stood once more in the long, shining kitchen with its neatly blackened stove and its row of polished tin pans.

"It couldn't be more complete in any way," she pronounced her judgment. "Nor could it be prettier."

"It's all for you, Mrs. Johnson. You're to come here this very day, and this is to be your new home. You are to sleep in the bedrooms, and cook in the kitchen, and -"

"But I don't understand," faltered Mrs. Johnson, her bewilderment deepened with every second. "Where did it all come from? Whose is it? How -"

"It came from everybody," laughed Jenny. "Lots of people helped. And its yours, I tell you, to live in as long as you want to, you and the children. Don't you see, dear?"

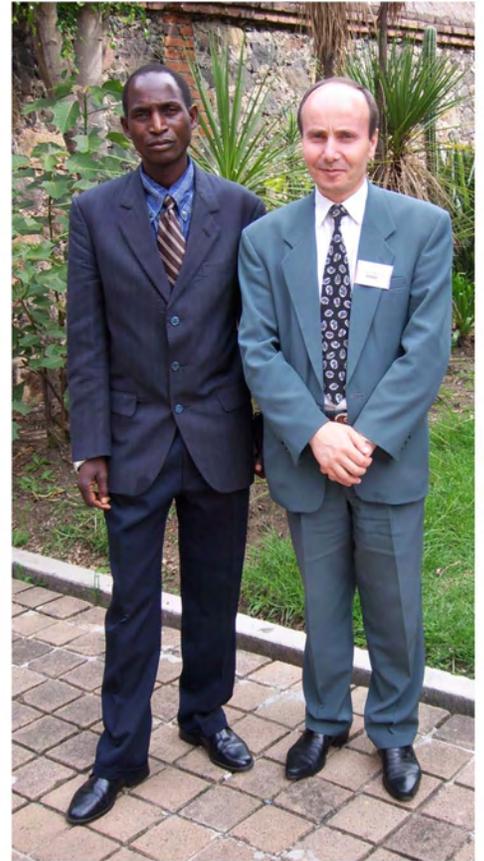
Little Mrs. Johnson dropped down suddenly in the middle of the shining floor.

"Oh, my land! My land!" she sobbed, rocking to and fro. "I never knew there were such kind folks in the world. I feel just as if I'd got into one of the many mansions."

Mother patted the bent shoulders gently.

"You have," she said, "into one He's been preparing for you. Only instead of angels He used a lot of warm, loving human hands to do it with."





General
Conference
2007

THE CHILD SPIRIT

Does the way seem a stony one?
Not one stone can impede your progress!

Courage.

Face the future, but face it with a brave and happy heart.

Do not seek to see it. You are robbing Faith of her sublime
sweetness if you do this.

Just know that all is well, and, that Faith, not seeing, but
believing, is the barque that will bear you to safety, over
the stormy waters.

"According to your faith, be it unto you" (Mat. 9:29) was
my injunction to those who sought healing of me.

If for wonder-working, if for healing, if for salvation,
faith was so necessary, then the reason is clear why I
urged that all who sought entrance to My kingdom must
become as little children.

Faith is the child-attitude.

Seek in every way to become child-like.

Seek, seek, seek until you find, until the years have added
to your nature that of a trusting child.

Not only for its simple trust must you copy the child-spirit,
but for its joy in life, its ready laughter, its lack of
criticism, its desire to share all with men.

Ask much that you may become as little children, friendly
and loving towards all – not critical, not fearful.

"Except ye... become as little children, ye shall not enter
into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3.

Submitted by Kathleen Ross, from the book *Two Listeners*,
Edited by A.J. Russell.

