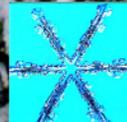


the Reformation *Messenger*

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1, JANUARY 2003

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





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.

Official Publication of the International Missionary Society of the Seventh Day Adventist Church Reform Movement, Canadian Field.

- Tel: 416-252-1197 Fax: 416-252-6625
- Email: tmartin@netcom.ca
- Web: <http://ims.truepath.com>

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(Price includes 12 issues, one per month, including shipping & handling)

Amount of cheque: \$

Payable to: IMS Publishing

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www.imssdarm-bg.org/Index1.htm

IMS PUBLISHING

54 Newcastle Street
Toronto, Ontario
M8Y1A3
CANADA

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE 2003

The Lord in His mercy and great patience has granted us still another year to get ready for His coming. The believers in the Advent faith never thought that the time would last this long. Many faithful members have been laid to rest and others have taken their places; but the 144,000 number is not yet full.

According to the Spirit of Prophecy we are nearing the time of mighty shaking in our church. Some will not be ready for the Lord's coming even if still more time would be granted. Therefore the Lord will suddenly cut His work short, and put an end to all sin and evil and reward His faithful servants.

Satan is also very active knowing that he has but little time left. He tries to lull all believers to sleep as the foolish virgins, unprepared. It is dangerous to allow sinful indulgences and neglected duties to continue, even a little longer.

Now is the time to make New Year resolutions again. One good resolution would be to get more involved in missionary work. Our publishing house is full of literature, which needs to be spread out like the leaves of autumn. Even the little children can get involved in this work; they can drop the various flyers in the mailboxes, which the church will provide free to them.

We in the last Reform movement have great knowledge of the truth. Therefore we also have great responsibility to put this knowledge into practice. This

brings to us also the danger to sin with knowledge, which can drive the Holy Spirit away from us. In the last shaking only the members who have lost the Holy Spirit will be shaken out like the foolish virgins who had no oil in their vessels.

A member in the church who does not practice all his knowledge will lose interest in the meetings and also in the Bible study. Why should he learn more



while he is not practicing his present knowledge.

Fearful and solemn is the time in which we live today. The signs of the times have been fulfilled to a great extent. There is no event to take place before our judgment in the heavenly court and the sealing. The mighty shaking and the latter rain will take place after the sealing work is done in the church of

God. To sleep spiritually now can be fatal. To neglect our duty which the Lord has placed upon us can bring upon us the judgment, which came upon the servant with one talent.

The editors and the writers of the Reformation Messenger have a great burden to awake our people to see the seriousness of the time and the necessary preparation for the end.

“The word is: Go forward; discharge your individual duty, and leave all consequences in the hand of God. If we move forward where Jesus leads the way we shall see His triumph, we shall share His joy. We must share the conflicts if we wear the crown of victory. Like Jesus we must be made perfect through suffering. Had Christ's life been one of ease, then might we safely yield to sloth. Since His life was marked with continual self-denial, suffering, and self-sacrifice, we shall make no complaint if we are partakers with Him.” Test. Vol. 5 p. 71

Courage, Brothers and Sisters, let us go forward to the victory. Let this New Year bring a change in our lives and deeper consecration to the cause of God.

This may well be the last opportunity to save ourselves. Consider this remaining time of probation more precious than gold.

May the Lord bless all the readers and writers of this magazine. **AMEN**

The Editors

“A HELPLESS BABY”

MATTHEW 2:9-12, LUKE 2:1-7

“...And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

Jesus Christ... “a helpless baby”, cradled in a manger, a cattle feeder, was born more than 1000 years after David’s birth. He was dedicated at the temple in Jerusalem 40 days after birth, and His name was inscribed on the roll of the first-born. (DA 43-52).

Jesus Christ is of royal descent, as King and is first named “son of David” in the kingly line, true heir to David’s throne. He was then named “son of Abraham”, the seed through whom the whole earth will be blessed. The Lord was first to present Himself as King, after that as Saviour. (John 1:11, 12).

Jesus was born legal King of the Jews through Joseph, also, His conception by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary shows Him also to be the Son of God, the Eternal Word, who was with God and was God, (John 1:1-2), yet became man (John 1:14) fulfilling (Isa, 7:14). Jesus, therefore, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, hence had a sinless human nature joined to Deity; thus Jesus is able to “save his people from their sins.” (Mat. 1:21). All of this, following the birth of ... “a helpless baby”, born in Bethlehem of the land of Judea. In the animal kingdom, following birth, a calf, lamb, or goat rises up and walks on all fours, feeds or nurses readily without any assistance or care. A baby infant might require 1-2 years before walking or talking, and requires constant care... truly “helpless”. The parents of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, however, provided divine care for Jesus, the “helpless baby”; raising Him and training Him with love “true to God and principle, and true to God under all circumstances, unselfishly and truthfully, yielding themselves to God.” (Ed. 283; CT 150; CT 148; FE 420).

The three “wise men,” seekers of light, jour-

neyed to Judea from Mesopotamia. “Wise men” is from the Greek, “magoi”, a Persian word for men expert in the study of the stars. Also, such were the philosophers, astronomers, and astrologers of the ancient eastern nations of that time. They were actually a learned class, and believing Gentiles, said to have come from Persia.

They traveled by night and rested by day. There were no roads, or streets or lights, as today but were led by a star. Some astrologers of today say that it was merely a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in 6 B.C., others, an exploding star-nova. This is not true; but it was a totally supernatural phenomenon! This star was a group of angels leading the wise men to the infant, Jesus. Furthermore, it’s interesting to learn that these angels bypassed Jerusalem, the center at that time of religious culture and beliefs; a mecca of the Pharisees, Sanhedrin, Sadducees, and various Jewish followers and believers.

It’s, perhaps, even more astounding that these angels of divine origin, first revealed the momentous event of the birth of Jesus to some shepherds in the open terrain and fields. This also lends much doubt to the actual date of the nativity, since the shepherds in Palestine customarily do not remain in the open with their flocks, except from spring to autumn. The legendary or traditional date of December 25 cannot be traced back farther than the 4th century; a date such as December 25, therefore, was merely a date settled upon by the Western Church. The Eastern, or Orthodox Church celebrates January 6, another fallacy. In addition, it’s interesting to note that the shepherds of that time were bitterly despised by the Pharisees, and shunned. They were considered to be at the same lowly level as the vilest sinners; thieves, criminals, beggars, prostitutes, and were forbidden from entering the Temple; an ironic circumstance, “since they were a company that were prepared to receive the heavenly message.” (GC 314).

When the wise men entered the house, they saw the young, infant child with Mary, His

mother, and fell down then and worshipped Him; Mary, too knelt and worshipped at the side of Jesus... the “helpless Baby”... and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (v. 11). Gold is a present for a King, incense a gift for a priest, and myrrh for someone who is suffering.

GOLD

Gold was widely recognized as a gift usually reserved for a King’s deity. Jesus Christ from His birth was rightly a King, although not born in a stately palace of a King. If someone were to ask, “If you are a King, where were you born?” This is a natural question to ask. If someone were to ask Jesus the same question, what would be His response? A stable. If born in a magnificent palace, one would naturally be considered a King with all its pomp and ceremony. The world would have immediately accepted Jesus if He was born in such surroundings. Jesus’ attendants and believers, however, at His birth were Mary and Joseph, some shepherds leaning on their staffs, a donkey, cow and a horse... “born in a wretched hovel prepared for cattle.” (GC 313).

Jesus Christ could not manifest himself as King with gold on the exterior. He did not come as a worldly King as many expected, His kingdom was in His heart, and as such the wise men bestowed the gift of gold upon Him as the true King, and rightfully reign as King.

What did the local citizenry say? “His citizens hated Him, and sent a message after Him saying, we will not have this man reign over us.” (Lk. 19:14). We are also given a glimpse here of the hatred and hated Herod the Great, an aged failing tyrant, notoriously jealous and unprincipled, a stark contrast to the true “King of the Jews.” He was a wicked wretch, insanely insecure, who even murdered some of his own family, the murderer of the innocent children of Bethlehem and as the would-be murderer of the Messiah.

If Jesus Christ was born a King, the world

would then say in the majority, “We, the inhabitants of this earth want a real King, not gold... but power... action... not this humble King. He’s too meek and gentle, and He asks too much. He asks us to be humble, also, meek and kind. We don’t want this! A King gives us power!”

The disciples, too, waited for something greater! They continually were fighting amongst themselves, saying, “I’ll be the highest in the Kingdom. I’ll sit on the right side and my brother will sit on the left side.” They were looking for a King which gives power... worldly power... force! Many called Jesus Christ merely a man. “He’ll reign over us?”

What pride rules in our fragile lives? What rules our living hearts? Many say, “I don’t want it!” If we don’t accept this gold gift, you are not a King and a Priest. We have to accept this gold... it is pure faith. It is faith and character “tried in the fire of affliction.” (Rev. 3:18). “... buy of me this gold tried in the fire that you may be rich; and white raiment” Jesus Christ has this gold... pure faith. When Jesus comes, our King, we have to be like Him... this King.

INCENSE

A gift for a priest who represents the blood of atonement; and one’s merits, an intercession. In Old Testament times when a sinner approaches God he has to offer incense, and has no right to take it in his own hand... matters of his life... but gives the incense to the priest, the intercessor, who then takes it into the Temple and puts it into a prayer-offering after praying for the sinner, like so, “Lord, he confesses his sins, and presents his prayer to you. Accept this prayer and forgive him (or her).” “...Lord, teach us to pray.” (Lk. 11:1). Jesus was found praying and the disciples asked Him, “Lord, teach us to pray”... “He had offered up prayers with strong crying and tears...” (Heb. 5:7). Here Jesus is crying out in prayer to His Father. He cried loud, with tears! He asked something!

If we want to be a King, like Jesus, not only gold is needed but incense is needed. When we pray for someone, not only tell the story to God of the circumstances, but do as Jesus did. When Jesus prayed for Mary Magdalene, He cried out to the Father, “Send the devil out from her.” He prayed thusly so that God could hear His prayer. Do not pray mechanically, repetitively, gloomily. We need to pray to God for help and He

will help. Ask! Say, “Lord, you promised to help,” but ask earnestly, humbly, and obediently in the name of Jesus... and with the blood of Jesus. This is the incense we have to present to God. We have to pray like Jesus... pure incense. Many pray to icons, an image only. Others don’t pray like most Christians or to icons but turn to a wall, elevate their hands, and pray to God, (i.e. Rabbi). When praying, really search you heart and say what is in your heart, softly and tenderly. Let your prayers rise freely as incense to the heavens above. Then... patiently wait... “From the golden altar, the fragrance of incense, His life, diffused for miles around the sanctuary.” (PP 348).

MYRRH

Myrrh is compared to “sincere and uncorrupted faith (CT 60) but also symbolizes suffering. It was used, too, as an embalming agent for the dead and for Jesus, hinting of His mission to die. In Psalm 45:8, it reads, “your robes are all fragrant with myrrh.” Myrrh came as a preparation of powder, and was put into water to then drink. In the Old Testament, myrrh was thusly given to the priest for suffering, symbolically, a bitter drink. “I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict.” (Lk. 22:15). Jesus said, “...before I suffer they will reject Me; kill Me. I have to suffer.” The disciples were ready to be kings and accept also that Jesus prayed for them. But, when Jesus had to suffer... the disciples left Him alone... abandoned Him. Peter, in talking with Jesus, was answered by Jesus, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you, Follow me.” (Lk. 21:22). This is the essence of the three gifts offered to Jesus... “A Helpless Baby”... Follow Me.

We have to accept this gold, incense and myrrh! It’s interesting, that when one is happy, full of gold, there are many friends about. When we pray for others, they accept us. When we have to suffer, they don’t recognize us... we’re often alone... but, not lonely! “...for thy are by my side, thy rod and staff comfort me.” (Ps. 23)

If someone murmurs... there’s dissention... don’t leave! You have to go the way of Jesus Christ for this gold, incense and myrrh. The wise men brought these precious gifts. Why? Because,

they were seeking the Light and found it 2000 years ago. Today, the Lord Jesus is offering us these same gifts. There will be suffering; too, it’s known, but, “ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? (Lk. 24:26)

Jesus Christ says, “...follow me as Kings and Priests.” Are you willing?

Our Lord Jesus Himself taught that we must all become babes... weak... Helpless Babies. Paul said to the Corinthians, “You see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.” (1 Cor. 1:26).

Spiritually we never grow old. The Ancient of Days represents the eternal childhood. “I am the First and the Last.” (Rev. 1:17). God Almighty became the weakest thing in His own creation... a “Helpless Baby.”

The mature saint is just like a “Helpless Baby” that needs to be nourished according to the dictates of the Spirit of God, so that we grow “into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13).

So, go on living the life that God would have you live and you will grow younger, but only when we learn the absolute necessity of being born from above. Then, let God have His way.

Have we allowed our personal human lives to become “Bethlehem” for the Son of God?

AMEN.

**John Theodorou
USA/Greece**



“PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR”

Every culture seems to be afraid of something or someone. In the time of Jesus, the Hebrews feared and hated the Romans because of the ruthless might of the troops that were occupying their land. Eventually those fears were realized as Rome viciously destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

In the last century, before the fall of the Iron Curtain, the Western countries feared destruction from Soviet nuclear missiles. This fear was abated somewhat when the Iron Curtain fell.

Today there is growing alarm and outrage over drug and gang-related violence in cities. Is anyone safe any more on the city streets in any country? There is no country that is exempt from violence. Today, also, there is another greater fear looming in everyone's mind. A new threat has emerged now that appears more deadly. The threat of a terrorist attack. Beginning with the Sept. 11 disaster in New York, and extending to Oct 12 in Bali, this threat is causing much more fear in the hearts of men than we saw previously. Everyone feels vulnerable. A day hardly goes by without the news reporters talking about possible terrorist attacks in the future and what the various countries are doing to protect themselves. This is bringing the countries together – they are uniting to fight a common enemy.

As time goes on and more is revealed about terrorist organizations and their activities, the fear is mounting to stupendous heights. When will it end?

Truly we are seeing the prophetic words written by Luke regarding the end of time on this planet being fulfilled. We see, “men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth:” Luke 21:26. Men's hearts failing them due to fear. This verse has often said to have been begun to be fulfilled in the nuclear age – after the USA dropped the Atomic Bombs

in Japan, men's hearts are filled with fear. There is enough ammunition stored up on this planet to blow it up several times over. After 1989 when the tensions began to ease between East and West due to the fall of the Iron Curtain, people began to relax. The two superpowers were talking together about destroying some of their weaponry. This world was getting to be a little bit of a better place with the threat of all-out war easing.

Now it is becoming more tense again so, men's hearts are failing them for fear today. During the war against Iraq by the U.S. in the early 1990's, several people perished in Israel after Saddam Hussein sent his scud missiles there. How did these people die? Their hearts failed them – they were elderly people. It will not get any better as we near the end of time as the devil's activities will increase with relentless fury.

Fear is mounting as the U.S.A is threatening Iraq. Fear and unrest are arising in many hearts of people once again. This lamb-like beast in Revelation 13 is speaking like a dragon. Whether the UN supports them or not, the U.S.A. is starting to show its strength and might. Why? Prophecy is being fulfilled. Will we ever have peace and harmony on this earth any more without any need for fear? Only with God in our hearts can this peace be cast out. Perfect love casteth out fear.

Although by serving God our lives may not be at risk on account of our faith, fear can yet still be a grave challenge to our faith as well. Fear is a natural reaction, but it springs from thoughts of what might happen. Our fears grow out of the anticipation of evil consequences. We foresee impending pain or disaster and fear takes root. During a war we can see and expect disasters, however with a terrorist attack, it can happen anywhere at any time, with no warning.

We are prone to make wrong choices when

we are afraid. Though we seek to walk with the Lord, when a moment of fear seizes us, we often stumble and our footsteps falter. If we should hesitate, our fears gain the upper hand. Our courage dwindles until we no longer have the strength to resist. And instead of walking in faith, we find ourselves walking in fear.

Fear poses a threat to every Christian. Believers today need not fear losing their lives or homes if they take a stand for Christ. Yet the fear of ridicule, fear of what others may think, does drain the resolve of far too many believers. The threat fear poses is nothing new. In a very real sense the issue we face is: Which 'fear' will dominate our lives? The fear of others? Which includes, “A painful feeling of impending danger, evil or trouble. The feeling of being afraid.”

Or the fear of the Lord – a fear, which has no hint of terror but rather exists as an awed awareness that Christ, is real, and in charge of every circumstance of our lives?

PETER

Fear of the truth and its consequences can lead even the strongest among us to hide behind lies and half-truths. This is what the disciple Peter did. He appeared so confident earlier that evening, however when fear gripped him in the courtyard of the high priest's house, he denied to a servant girl that he had any connection with Jesus.

Normally Peter would have paid little attention to the young woman, who was merely a doorkeeper in Caiaphas' household. But having watched his Master's arrest and perhaps having learned from John, who gained him access to the courtyard, about the events taking place inside, Peter told an outright lie. Apparently he feared what the girl might say or do if he admitted to being one of Jesus' followers.

Peter illustrates the threat fear poses to our faith. Once we surrender to its influences, it

becomes easier and easier to give in to fear. A pattern of avoidance develops. Prior to Jesus' arrest, Peter had sworn that he was willing to give his life for Jesus. Indeed, it was Peter who had brashly attacked a member of the party that came to arrest Jesus. Yet here he was, mere hours later frightened enough to lie about being a disciple of Christ to a servant girl.

Peter's first mistake was a failure to take Jesus' advice. Jesus had urged the disciples to "pray that ye enter not into temptation." Luke 22:40. He even specifically warned Peter of the testing that would come, saying, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." V. 31. But Peter and the other disciples did not heed Jesus' advice. The result was that Peter denied Christ and fled with the rest of the disciples.

Do you have any places in your life that are so vulnerable that you would tell a lie – even to someone that you would normally regard as inconsequential – rather than reveal the truth? Like Peter, are you afraid of the consequences of being identified with Jesus? If so, you need a dose of the Spirit's power to give you the courage to be honest.

Peter was deeply ashamed of his cowardice after he denied Christ three times. He even wondered if he was to be considered an apostle any more. Yet Jesus restored him with the words, "Lovest thou Me? Three times Christ asked Peter this question, and three times Peter answered that he did. With this he was reinstated as an apostle whose duty to Christ was to "feed my sheep."

Jesus illustrated a truth with His words, a truth that we can take advantage of when we are tempted to give in to fear. "Perfect love casteth out fear." 1 John 4:18. A profession of love countered each denial driven by fear. When Peter confronted danger as a servant of the Lord in the future, he would not succumb to fear. His love for Christ was too great. As Christ promised, Peter did eventually give his life for Christ. Fear could not make Peter falter this time, for it was a sacrifice of love.

ON THE SEA

While the disciples were crossing the Sea of

Galilee one night with Jesus in their boat, a violent storm arose. The disciples became extremely fearful as they battled on in the storm, forgetting that the Prince of Peace was with them in the boat. The disciples didn't feel secure, but they were since they had Jesus with them. He is our source of peace also. The One who calmed the sea with a word certainly has the power to calm the storm of anxieties in us. We need only turn in faith to Him.

FEAR OF POVERTY

Some people have a fear of poverty. While they have a good job today, there is always the possibility of losing our source of income and resources for reasons such as: ill health, divorce, death of a provider, loss of a job, natural disaster, changing markets, and other circumstances beyond our control. It is precisely the fear of this possibility that tempts us to worry so much and forget about trusting God. Why rely on Him if He can't keep us from troubles like that. Why not just rely on ourselves and trust to our own devices? All the while we forget that God never promised that we wouldn't face hard times, and that He has many ways to help us through them when we do: family members, church members, neighbours, charities, inheritances, and even public agencies and non-profit groups.

Certainly we need to pay attention to our physical and material needs, but Jesus urged us to stop worrying about things, so that they dominate our lives and values. We can't do that and serve God at the same time. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Instead, we need to redirect our focus onto God's kingdom and righteousness. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Mat. 6:24, 33. That means adopting the values of Jesus and bringing Him into our work and lives. Jesus said that is what really matters.

ANANIAS

Saul had a reputation as a ruthless persecutor of Christians and this reputation preceded

him to Damascus. Perhaps hearing that Saul was headed his way, Ananias mentally prepared himself to be hunted down, arrested, imprisoned, and ultimately martyred for following the new movement. In any case, he was no doubt stunned by the Lord's command to go and meet this dangerous enemy face-to-face! His words of protest indicate fear. "Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:" Acts 9:13-15.

God commanded Ananias twice to go and Ananias did go to lay hands on Saul that he might receive the Holy Spirit and to baptise him. As a result, he witnessed the spiritual birth of early Christianity's greatest spokesperson. He also saw a dramatic demonstration of the truth that God's grace can overcome anyone's background. Ananias' story challenges believers today to consider: Who might God want us to approach with the message of His grace? Who that we know is the least likely to respond to Christ – yet just might if only someone would reach out in faith and obedience?

Even though afraid, Ananias possessed the commitment to obey God's call. Do we? Where can we find the depth of commitment needed to give us victory against fear? And what is the source of this commitment? The answer is simple: love. Love for the Lord is the source of our commitment.

JEREMIAH'S DAY

It is a normal tendency to flee from danger by running to places of safety. However, real peace and security do not come from gates, guards, or guns. Ultimately, they come from God. The people of Jeremiah's day lived in an increasingly dangerous world. The Assyrian empire was in decline, creating political instability in the Middle East. Seizing the opportunity, the Egyptians began to stage offensive campaigns from the south. Meanwhile, Babylon was emerging as a new superpower.

Yet in the midst of these danger signs, false prophets in Judah comforted the Israelites with words of peace. "For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." Jer. 8:11. The citizens took comfort in their walled cities, assuming that these defences would be a safe haven against hostile forces. "Why do we sit still? Assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the fenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord." Jer 8:14. But they were merely denying their true condition. The gravest danger the residents of Judah faced was one that they had created themselves, and one that they brought with them into their cities: they had turned their backs on God. "Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return." Jer 8:5. Repeated calls were made to bring them back to repentance. "How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them? Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD." Jer 8:8-12. Peace and refuge is found only in the love of Christ.

FALSE REFUGE

In our days, people have sought refuge from crime in the cities, by moving out to the suburban areas and to the country. Such attempts to curb violent crime are understandable, but evil is not so easily excluded. Merely controlling our environment cannot control it. Ultimately evil is a matter of dealing with

sin, whether personal or institutional, and that means repentance toward the Lord.

Inner peace cannot come just from shutting out evils from the outside; it also takes rooting out evils from the inside.

GUILTY CONSCIENCE

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe." Proverbs 29:25.

Sin will definitely leave us fearful. Fear is often a direct result of sin. When a person's life is in jeopardy, they often become fearful because they will have to face their Maker after death, and perhaps they have not lived according to His will.

And we read in Proverbs, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth:" Prov. 28:1. Fleeing from God will not bring relief in the judgment. Instead of running away from God, we should run to Him for mercy. When we repent of our sins, God will forgive us and soothe the fears that come from a guilty conscience. (1 John 1:9)

This can be a good fear if it brings us back to God, however this does not always happen.

When Herod heard of the works of Christ, he was exceedingly troubled. He thought that God had raised John from the dead, and sent him forth with still greater power to condemn sin. He was in constant fear that John would avenge his death by passing condemnation upon him and his house. Herod was reaping that which God had declared to be the result of a course of sin,—"a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." Deut. 28:65-67. The sinner's own thoughts are his accusers; and there can be no torture keener than the stings of a guilty conscience, which give him no rest day nor night." DA 223

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where

is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." I Corinthians 15:55,56.

The Christian Martyrs displayed no fear of death when tortured and condemned. They had made their peace with God.

"It was true that they had kept some timid souls through fear of death, from embracing but many, even of the most timid, received the truth, and immediately their fears and timidity left them, and as they witnessed the death of their brethren, and saw their firmness and patience, they knew that God and angels assisted them to endure such sufferings, and they grew bold and fearless. And when called to yield their own lives, they maintained their faith with such patience and firmness as caused even their murderers to tremble." 1SG 125.

FEAR OF DEATH

A common fear is fear of death – those of us who know the state of the dead are in danger of becoming fearful of whether we will be saved or not. Some worry too much about it.

"We should not make self the center and indulge anxiety and fear as to whether we shall be saved. All this turns the soul away from the Source of our strength. Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. Talk and think of Jesus. Let self be lost in Him. Put away all doubt; dismiss your fears. Say with the apostle Paul, "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. Rest in God. He is able to keep that which you have committed to Him. If you will leave yourself in His hands, He will bring you off more than conqueror through Him that has loved you." SC 71

"I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Psalm 34:4. Jesus delivered us from our what? From dangers? No, FEARS.... Though we may have fears that appear ridiculous to others, Jesus takes us seriously and will deliver us out of our fears. He doesn't ridicule us, rather he pities us and wants to deliver us from them.

We have the example of Moses after he had fled to Midian. He portrayed fear when asked to go back to Egypt to deliver the Israelites, however the “The Lord strengthened him and removed his fears by saying to him, “Return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.” 3SG 19

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.” Psalm 27:3.

Are you fearful? Is your fear positive or negative?

Jacob was afraid of Esau because of his sin, however Esau was also fearful. The Lord appeared to Jacob and took away his fear, assuring him that He would be with him to deliver him.

“Those professed Christians who come up to that last fearful conflict unprepared will, in their despair, confess their sins in words of burning anguish, while the wicked exult over their distress. These confessions are of the same character as was that of Esau or of Judas. Those who make them, lament the result of transgression, but not its guilt. They feel no true contrition, no abhorrence of evil. They acknowledge their sin, through fear of punishment; but, like Pharaoh of old, they would return to their defiance of Heaven should the judgments be removed. GC 620

SAVED BY FEAR

Some people’s faith is completely built on fear – their faith is like fire insurance. This may be fine initially with some people, as long as this fear leads a person to find refuge in Jesus, who alone can take all fears away.

“And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” Jude 23

“Christ will impart to His messengers the same yearning love that He Himself has in seeking for the lost. We are not merely to say, “Come.” There are those who hear the call, but their ears are too dull to take in its meaning. Their eyes are too blind to see anything good in store for them. Many realize their great degradation. They say, I am not fit to

be helped; leave me alone. But the workers must not desist. In tender, pitying love, lay hold of the discouraged and helpless ones. Give them your courage, your hope, your strength. By kindness compel them to come. “Of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” Jude 22, 23. COL 235

“Press home upon the conscience the terrible results of the transgression of God’s law. Show that it is not God who causes pain and suffering, but that man through his own ignorance and sin has brought this condition upon himself.” 6T 279



“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Mat. 10:28.

Jesus refines fear by rearranging our view so we look at things from God’s perspective. “And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. “Luke 12:4-7. He wants to draw our attention to the true fear that we are to possess, “The fear of the Lord

is the beginning of knowledge:...” Proverbs 1:7. This is not a fear that keeps us cringing in anxiety, but a respect for who God is – the One who holds ultimate power. When we have a balanced view of God, it puts our thinking in a proper framework. We view everybody and everything in relation to God’s holiness, righteousness, and love. We can’t ignore physical threats and violence, but we dare not ignore the One who holds sway over our eternal destiny.

We are not alone when we are afraid. God is with us. He can give us the power to walk in faith.

We need motivation to resist our fears. That motivation comes from our love and respect for our heavenly Father. And what really stands in the way of commitment? For God has conquered even death on our behalf! The only thing that we have left to fear is failing in our commitment to Jesus, for then we risk missing out on the rich rewards the Lord has prepared for us.

“The unbelieving world will soon have something to think of besides their dress and appearance; and as their minds are torn from these things by distress and perplexity, they will have nothing to turn to. They are not prisoners of hope, and therefore do not turn to the Stronghold. Their hearts will fail them for repining and fear. They have not made God their refuge, and He will not be their consolation then, but will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. They have despised and trampled upon the truths of God’s word. They have indulged in extravagant dress, and have spent their lives in hilarity and glee. They have sown to the wind; they must reap the whirlwind.” 1T 268/9.

May God help us to have the correct kind of fear and if we do not, we can find refuge in Jesus who will fill us with His perfect love, and cast out all fear. **AMEN**

Wendy Eaton

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST

“It is in doing Christ’s work that the church has the promise of His presence. Go teach all nations, He said, “and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” To take His yoke is one of the first conditions of receiving His power. The very life of the church depends upon her faithfulness in fulfilling the Lord’s commission. To neglect this work is surely to invite spiritual feebleness and decay. Where there is no active labor for others, love wanes, and faith grows dim.

“Christ intends that His ministers shall be educators of the church in gospel work. They are to teach the people how to seek and save the lost. But is this the work they are doing? Alas, how many are toiling to fan the spark of life in a church that is ready to die! How many churches are tended like sick lambs by those who ought to be seeking for the lost sheep! And all the time millions upon millions without Christ are perishing.” *Desire of Ages*, p. 825.

“Let there be in every church, well-organized companies of workers to labor in the vicinity of that church. Put self behind you, and let Christ go before as your life and power. Let this work be entered into without delay, and the truth will be as leaven in the earth. When such forces are set to work in all our churches, there will be a renovating, reforming, energizing power in the churches, because the members are doing the very work that God has given them to do. Let all our churches be active, zealous, filled with enthusiasm by the Spirit and power of God. It is the intelligent use of the means, the capabilities, the powers, given you by God, consecrated to His service, that will tell in the communities where you may labor. It may be that you will have to make a very small beginning in some places; but do not be discouraged; the

work will grow larger, and you will be doing the work of an evangelist. Look at Christ’s manner of working, and strive to labor as He did.” *Rev. & Her.*, 29/9/1891.

“All who study the life of Christ and practice His teachings will become like Christ. Their influence will be like His. They will reveal soundness of character. As they walk in the humble path of obedience, doing the will of God, they exert an influence that tells for the advancement of the cause of God and the healthful purity of His work. In these thoroughly converted souls the world is to have a witness to the sanctifying power of truth upon the human character.” *Test. Treas.*, book 2, p. 394.

Speak friendly and make personal exhortations.

“Personal, individual effort and interest for your friends and neighbours, will accomplish much more than can be estimated. It is for the want of this kind of labor that the souls for whom Christ died are perishing... Your work may accomplish more real good than the more extensive meetings, if they lack in personal effort. When both are combined with the blessing of God, a more perfect and thorough work may be wrought; but if we can have but one part done, let it be the individual labor of opening the Scripture in households, making personal appeals, and talking familiarly with the members of the family, not about things of little importance, but of the great themes of redemption. Let them see that your heart is burdened for the salvation of souls.” *Rev. & Her.*, Mar. 13, 1888.

“Christ’s work is to be our example. Constantly He went about doing good. In the temple and the synagogues, in the streets of the cities, in the market

place and the workshop, by the seaside and among the hills, He preached the gospel and healed the sick. His life was one of unselfish service and it is to be our lessonbook. His tender, pitying love rebukes our selfishness and heartlessness.” *Test. Treas.* 3, p. 298-299.

“Make the work of Christ your example. Constantly He went about doing good: feeding the hungry and healing the sick. Nobody who came to Him seeking sympathy felt disappointed. The Prince of the heavenly courts, was made flesh and dwelled among us, and His life-work is an example of the work that we must accomplish. His tender, merciful love reproves our selfishness and indifference.” *Manuscript 55*, 1901.

That work that every church should be doing.

“The work of gathering in the needy, the oppressed, the suffering, the destitute, is the very work which every church that believes the truth for this time should long since have been doing. We are to show the tender sympathy of the Samaritan in supplying physical necessities, feeding the hungry, bringing the poor that are cast out to our homes, gathering from God every day grace and strength that will enable us to reach to the very depths of human misery and help those who cannot possibly help themselves. In doing this work we have a favorable opportunity to set forth Christ the crucified One.” *Test. Treas.*, book 2, p. 514.

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” *Matt.* 24:14.

“As my Father hath sent Me, even so, send I you.” We are to bear as definite a testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, as did Christ and His apostles. Trusting

in the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, we are to testify of the mercy, goodness, and love of a crucified and risen Saviour, and thus be agents through whom darkness will be dispelled from many minds, and cause thanksgiving and praise to ascend from many hearts to God. There is a great work to be done by every son and daughter of God... According to the effort that the human instrument puts out in his work, God works in him and through him." Rev. & Her., June 25, 1895.

The church needs to be instructed in the missionary work.

"Watchman, what of the night?" Isa. 21:11.

Are the watchman of whom this question is asked in a position to give a clear sound of the trumpet? Are the shepherds leading faithfully the flock of which they have to give account? Are the ministers of God watching for the souls, understanding that those who are under their leadership have been bought by the blood of Christ?

We have a great work to be done in the world. What efforts are we putting out in order to accomplish it? The brothers and sisters have heard too many sermons; but, have they been taught to work for those for whom Christ died? Have they been proposed and presented some branch of the work in such a way that each one has seen the necessity to participate in the work?

May the Lord help us to understand what importance we have to testify for Christ.

AMEN

Guillermo Gamallo

“Prayer is ...”

“Prayer is the breath of the soul, the channel of all blessings. As, with a realization of the needs of humanity, with a feeling of self-loathing, the repentant soul offers its prayer, GOD sees its struggles, watches its conflicts, and marks its sincerity. He has His finger upon its pulse, and He takes note of every throb. Not a feeling thrills it, emotion agitates it, sorrow shades it, sin stains it, not a thought or purpose moves it, of which He is not cognizant.

That soul was purchased at an infinite cost, and is loved with a devotion that is unalterable.”

Spirit of Prophecy



THE CHURCH

In order to save man from his fallen condition God established a church; and this church has existed since the beginning. It is the purpose of God that His faithful children are united together in a family-type, loving fellowship. And this fellowship was to be so intimate as the members in one body. Christ is the head of the body and we are the members, serving the body, each one in a different capacity, according to our various talents.

The world is our enemy. The fallen churches are against us. The only support we have comes from the one true church, which is called the city of refuge and the fortress of God.

Authority of the Church

To this church, God gave a great authority, the keys of heaven. Often we do not fully understand this authority responsibility that the church has. Many take these things lightly, thinking that they can be saved outside the church as well, or being members in other church organizations.

“Many do not realize the sacredness of church relationship and are loath to submit to restraint and discipline. Their course of action shows that they exalt their own judgment above that of the united church, and they are not careful to guard themselves lest they encourage a spirit of opposition to its voice.” Test. Vol. 4, p. 17.

Unity in the Church

Apostle Paul writes, “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same

thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Cor. 1:10.

“Those who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and the angels of God can cooperate with them. But never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder. All these evils are the result of Satan’s efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy courage, and prevent successful action.” Test. Vol. 1, p. 650.

Satan hates the church of God. He tries to destroy the harmony and unity in it. He knows that if the harmony and love between the members is gone then the power to save is also gone from the church. Often the only way to restore the unity and peace in the church is shaking. This is the reason why the church has remained small like the mustard seed.

Teaching of the Church

The great blessing and asset that the church of God has is the truth. Paul writes that the church is, “the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1 Tim. 3:15.

It is a great privilege for the people to listen to the words of truth, while the vast majority of the Christians listen to the fables and lies in the churches that

are called Babylon in the Bible prophecy.

The truth that is spoken in the church of God is powerful and produces miracles. By the word of God was the world created, and by the word of God sinners are converted.

The truth fills us with joy and perfect peace. The truth gives us eternal life, if it is obeyed. The truth makes us free—free from sin and free from human weakness. How thankful we should be for this privilege of hearing the truth, that we do not need to listen to Satan’s falsehoods.

Work of the Church

God included the church into the great plan of salvation. God said, “ye are My witnesses.” Every member is called to be missionary. The paid workers should not be hovering over established churches; they should go to work in the new areas. By saving others we save ourselves. The members need to be educated for the soul saving work.

“The members of the churches should be made to understand that they are the light of the world, and according to their several ability the Lord expects them to enlighten and bless others. Whether they are rich or poor, great or humble, god calls them into active service for Him. He depends upon the church for the forwarding of His work, and He expects His professed followers to do their duty as intelligent beings.” Test. Vol. 6, p. 432.

Only a church that is active in the missionary work can be a spiritual, and a living church.

Love in the Church

Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:35.

True love cannot be found in the world, neither in the fallen churches. Only the church where the Holy Spirit dwells can have true love, because love is the fruit of the Spirit. It is love that makes the church active in soul saving. It is love that gives us patience toward erring members. It is love that unites the members together as one body.

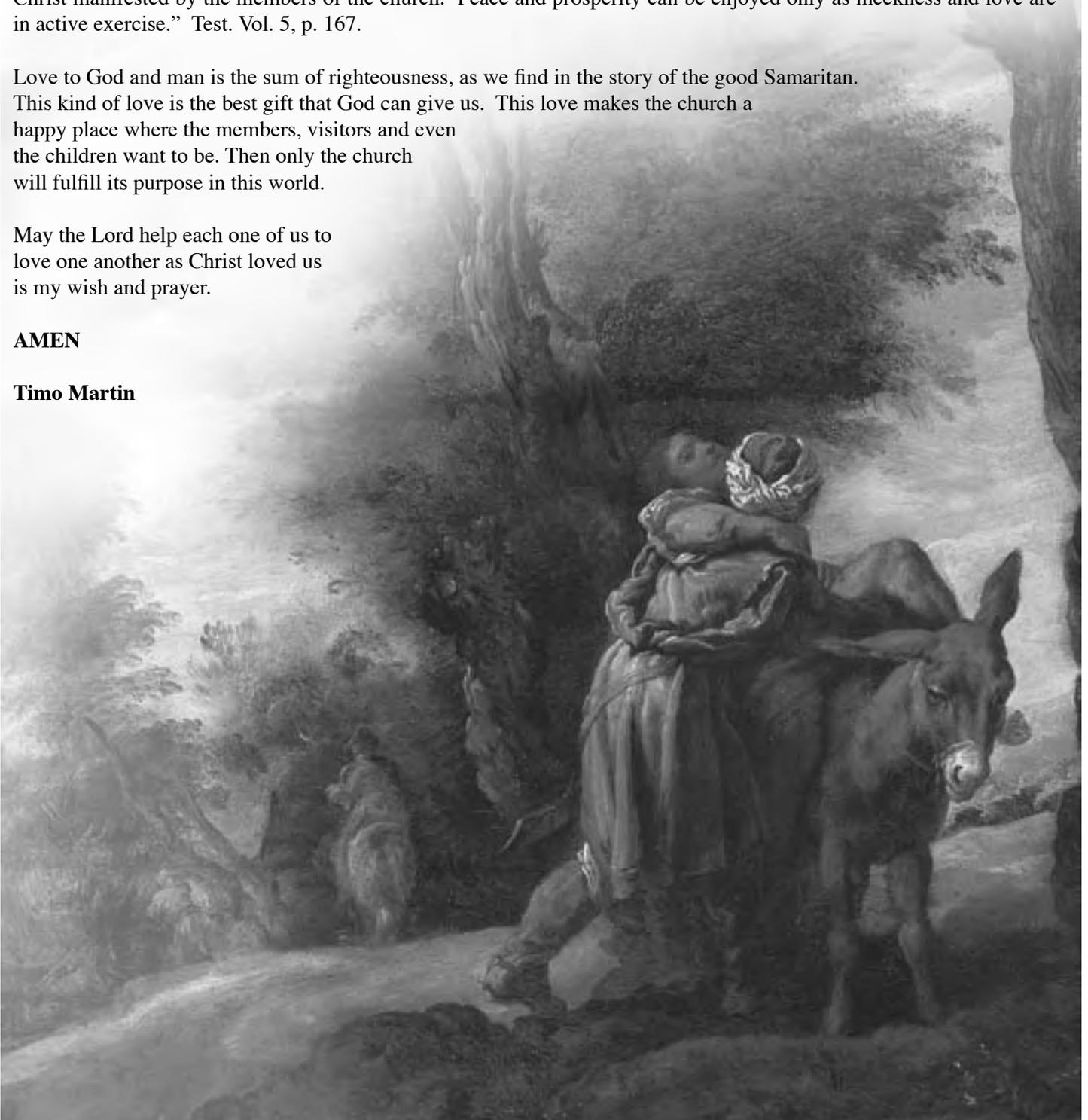
“Christians who manifest a spirit of unselfish love for one another are bearing a testimony for Christ which unbelievers can neither gainsay nor resist. It is impossible to estimate the power of such an example. Nothing will so successfully defeat the devices of Satan and his emissaries, nothing will so build up the Redeemer’s kingdom, as will the love of Christ manifested by the members of the church. Peace and prosperity can be enjoyed only as meekness and love are in active exercise.” Test. Vol. 5, p. 167.

Love to God and man is the sum of righteousness, as we find in the story of the good Samaritan. This kind of love is the best gift that God can give us. This love makes the church a happy place where the members, visitors and even the children want to be. Then only the church will fulfill its purpose in this world.

May the Lord help each one of us to love one another as Christ loved us is my wish and prayer.

AMEN

Timo Martin



TWO LIFESTYLES

I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth..." Genesis 4:14

"...they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Hebrews 11:13

Since man fell in sin and was forbidden to eat from the tree of life, the possibility to live eternally vanished and he knew that his life would sooner or later come to an end. This end could be transitory or permanent, depending on his acceptance or rejection of the plan God Father, in His infinite grace, had made and fulfilled to save humanity.

Man was given free will, the possibility to choose and God, through His Spirit, is constantly speaking to our conscience and conveying the message: "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life..." Deuteronomy 30:19 We make the choice how to live upon this earth, either as fugitives and vagabonds which was Cain's case or as strangers and pilgrims which was the case of Abraham and the patriarchs.

In both these cases there is no permanent residence, there is a constant movement, but there is a big difference in the state of mind and the destination of these two kinds of people. A fugitive is running away from someone, is chased, many times has a burdened conscience, looks for a place to hide, for a shelter. A vagabond roams about without a goal, without aspiration, lives near the places where the people dump their rubbish expecting to find something to eat and sleeps in the open together with the roaming dogs having as a blanket the starry sky which he does not dare to look at because he considers himself excluded from the promise written on them, the promise given

to Abraham and to all who share his faith and faithfulness: "In blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven..." Genesis 22:17, the promise of making out of us a light on this world and of helping us grow in Jesus "the morning star" Revelation 2:28

What a sad life is the one spent drifting, having as the only expectation death, going through life without knowing where one comes from, what the purpose of it is, why one actually lives, knowing that one is dust and to dust one will return and after that nothing.

A stranger and a pilgrim on the other hand has a completely different attitude. A stranger knows he does not belong to the place where he is, that means he knows the place he comes from. He identifies himself with something, with a fatherland. He has a place of origin, a citizenship. Paul reminds us: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 3:20. Jesus said "My kingdom is not of this world" and in Matthew we are told we should look first for the kingdom of Heaven. Man, as a stranger on this earth, has a heavenly and royal origin and tries to spend his temporary life in the enemy's territory without being taken into captivity, but as a free man.

A pilgrim although he is on the move, has a goal, he is going somewhere to worship and he knows very well where and how. "God is Spirit and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth." John 4:24 On his way to the holy shrine he is in constant prayer and feeds himself spiritually with God's word. He looks at the sky and is guided by the stars as were the magi who came from the Orient to worship Jesus at his birth-

place. These stars were angels whose presence he can spot at his side at all times.

A pilgrim walks with his feet firm on the earth, careful to follow the right route which was set in front of him but with his head set in heaven where the object of his adoration is and where he belongs and longs to go to, physically. He does not dwell in a house, but in tents because he desires a better and heavenly country. "Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them." Hebrews 11:16 He considers even his bone structure as a tent, a temporary dwelling place because he believes the promise: "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God... for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Corinthians 15:50, 53.

A pilgrim also knows that he is dust and to dust he will return, but he believes that the One who out of love died for him and resurrected from the dead will bring him back to life because "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men the most pitiable." 1 Corinthians 15:19. His hope is the one of Job: "And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God." (19:25)

May the Lord help us accept His infinite grace and live a life like Abraham's, longing for the heavenly city whose architect is God and not like Cain, believing that our sins are too big to be forgiven and thus limiting God's capacity to show mercy.

AMEN

Theresa Corti

WORK AT HONEY FRUIT

On May 7th 2002 at 2:00 a.m. I prayed to God, like this, "O dear Lord, our heavenly Father, we want to start our reformation work in a new place, But we are confused, where we will go? Kindly send us to where your will is, according to John 6:44, 45. "No one can come to Me unless the father who sent Me draws him: and I will rise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets and they shall all be taught by God. Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the father comes to Me." And tell us the name of place. Amen. Then I slept. When I was sleeping I saw a dream. A big lake, full of water, a small way is there in the centre of the lake. I am walking on this way, many people are bathing there, particularly two men were bathing nakedly. I asked them, brethren why are you bathing naked? They replied to me, shall we dress when we are bathing? We don't know this. I was surprised at their answer, so I simply asked, what is the name of your place? "Thenkanikottai," they said.

I woke up from bed at 4:00 a.m. early the next morning. I remembered the same dream still. So, God is willing to send me to the new place called Thenkanikottai, (Note: water = people, naked = they don't know truth of Holy Sabbath, Ten Commandments, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.) But I don't know where the place is located in India. I consulted with my co-worker. We understood that it is the boundary of two states called Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the languages spoken are Tamil and Kanada.

God gave a chance for us on June 13-14, 2002 to travel there. The meaning of the place name is, Then = Honey, Kani = Fruit, Kottai = Fort. So, Honey fruit fort is a very interesting name. We remembered the Garden of Eden. We travelled seven hours to this new

place, new people, no one we knew, no body was there to invite us. My co-worker G. Khiviyathan simply sang with joy.

*"New heaven, new earth,
the rain is falling everywhere,
we are coming, no one is there to
invite us
But this rain flower's inviting us
Thank the Lord! Thank the Lord!!*

We arrived there safely and stayed in a hotel. We prayed for a full night to find new souls.

The next day we walked every street of this town. Finally we were very tired and sat in front of a High School. More than one hour we watched. One boy crossed over to us, holding some note books. We saw a picture of Jesus Christ's figure on the cover of the books so we called him over and talked with him. He is a Christian boy, but Catholic. His name was John Peter. We were very happy at the same moment. We told him we are servants of God. God sent us to this place to teach the Bible

and pray in the name of our everlasting Saviour Jesus Christ. So, if you give us your address, we will come to your place and bring a lot of blessings. We said this to him, then he left us to go to school. Within ten minutes he came back with a boy named Antony. We understood that God started His work. We were also starting the ministry with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We were praying, praying and always praying as we knocked door to door. The same day we preached in two houses. Nearly twenty members were present in both places. We spoke Honey-full and fruitful messages in this fort (town) about the message. The house owner says he has been the village leader for the past fifteen years. God touched him. He invited us. He is ready to invite many people for the meeting from the same town. Whoever is reading this article, my brothers and sisters, can you pray for us to find many souls to our Saviour's kingdom from there? Do you say yes? Do so now. Thank the Lord. Amen.

**S. Raj Israel M.A., B.Ed.
India**



**Third Youth Conference, May 10 - 12, 2002
Ambur, Tamilnadu, India**

Vancouver Evangelization Seminar

November 21st - 24th 2002

From 21st till 24th of November 2002 in Vancouver we had the privilege to have an open Evangelization Seminar held by Br. Henry Dering from California, USA. The motto was “Daniel and Revelation Seminar”.

In Power Point Presentation were presented four important topics:

1. “The Four Horsemen of Revelation 6”

– “And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell fol-

lowed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”



There were presented the first four periods of the early Christian church and the specific signs, which the Bible speaks about. Looking to the facts from the history we have to be prepared to meet the future, armored with the power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit of the Lord to be able to overcome every obstacle in our Christian life.

2. “Jesus Christ

– the way, the Truth and the Life” – John 14:6 “ Jesus saith unto him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man

cometh unto the Father, but by me”.

There was explained the mission of Jesus – His life, service, sufferings, death and resurrection for each one of us. At the end an appeal was made to follow Him every moment of our life on this earth and to meet Him in the New Jerusalem.

3. “Is the World coming to an End?”

– Matt.24:14 “and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come”.

There was presented the most important events in World history – earthquakes, diseases, famine, floods, volcano eruptions and prophecies of what the Bible says we have to expect soon. Will there be a 3rd World war, or will Jesus come soon again? With lots of animations and effects, which took the attention of the people, this subject pointed to the time in which we are living and showed the need to be prepared to meet our Lord Jesus Christ soon.

4. “Who Fought against Babylon the Great”

– Rev. 18:1,2 “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and



the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird'".

This amazing presentation brought us back to the time when the Waldenses were living and working to spread the manuscripts of the Bible. Dozens of pictures showed us the life and their missionary work for spreading this important message for their time. The same is our mission today. We have to work and spread the message that God has given to us in the same manner as the ancient Waldenses did in their time.

Those were the four Bible subjects that, with the help of the Lord, Br. Henry Dering presented. We also enjoyed the nice music that our guest from Sac-

ramento, USA, Sylvia Myhre played every evening before and after the topics, and also the beautiful songs that were sung by Br. Dering, Sis. Sylvia and Sis. Yonka. The visitors which came enjoyed both the subjects and the music. Some of them had questions about different Bible topics and all of them were satisfied with the answers.

Vancouver is a field where a big part of the population are people from middle Asia, but we are thankful to the Lord that we had this opportunity to witness here and the people who came were able to hear the Word of the Lord for this last time of the Earth's history.

The Bible says in Eccl.11:1-4 "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; For thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be. He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap".

This was our time to sow. We sowed and God will reap! "Those sowing in tears, with singing do reap, Whoso goeth on and weepeth, Bearing the basket of seed, Surely cometh in with singing, bearing his sheaves!" **Amen**

Michael Mitov, Vancouver



Transgression Destroys Mighty Kingdoms

First, thank you Father in heaven for your constant love and protection that we sometimes take for granted. Thank you JESUS CHRIST for your love and great sacrifice. Let us always remember to honor his sacrifice by living by His example. Forgive us of our sins LORD for we are in a constant battle against our flesh and our enemy Satan. LORD, please bless me with wisdom to speak truths and not with my own words for I know I cannot utter one sentence of truth without your guidance.

Oh Israel how you have fallen! Chosen by GOD as the nation to bring light to the rest of the world yet your transgressions and pride have betrayed you. How long will you walk in the desert of deception? How long will you follow foolish traditions instead of repenting from your ways? Oh Israel, how the mighty has fallen! Your pain is great and much sorrow can be found in your History. Yet, GOD never turned his back on you completely and you once again have your land in your hands. Your nation is born again yet you are in constant battle and peace is far from you. Blood constantly flows in your streets by the acts of murders and it seems you never question why? You are surrounded by those that hate you. Why has your nation had to suffer so much? Are you not the nation of GOD? Are you not the seed of Abraham?

St. Matthew 27:24-25

“When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude saying,

I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.”

“Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.”

By your own words the rejection of JESUS CHRIST has caused your nation to pay the price of transgression. Oh Israel, your trust has been placed on the hands of men and you have rejected the lamb of GOD. Look no further for an explanation than this. Repent of your ways and do not allow your foolish pride to keep you from the promise made to Abraham. Your journey from Egypt it seems never took place in your hearts. You are still slaves in your hearts and by the rejection of JESUS CHRIST your nation will continue to suffer. Oh Israel, repent and accept the gift of the blood of JESUS CHRIST.

I speak of Israel because our nation is in danger of falling away from GOD’s grace. If we continue to pass laws that transgress His ways and continue our path of forgetfulness of the sacrifice of JESUS we will also fall into chaos. Oh no, America is not exempt from history and many a mighty nation has fallen by their inequity. This nation was born on the principles of Christianity. Look no further as to why we are the world’s super power. We are a nation born with “Justice for all” rolling from our lips yet we run a danger of becoming corrupted by the lies of Satan and sinful men. I say, wake up America and do not allow Satan to deceive you. He uses our love of freedom to stake a claim that all things are acceptable no matter if they transgress the laws of GOD. I tell you

now, freedom was not invented by America and Satan knows nothing of freedom. True freedom is overcoming the lies of Satan who tells us everything we do is justified. He tells us we can’t expect anything more. He tells us that GOD does not exist. He tells us that JESUS CHRIST was a myth. FREEDOM is what GOD and the sacrifice of JESUS offers us, freedom from that which kills us slowly... the transgression of the ways of GOD.

Wait, who am I and what do I understand? I’m 25 years of age and I have fallen into my own lusts of the flesh. I am neither a scholar nor a good student in the schools of men. It might seem as if I am passing judgment, but I tell you that I am one of you and I am no better. I have fallen and transgressed the ways of GOD...yet because of his mercy I am able to get up and continue to walk on my journey of salvation. Do we not remember Babylon? Do we not remember Rome? Why is America exempt from destruction...only to be remembered in history books? Open your eyes and more importantly your hearts. Understand this; only by the grace of GOD can any nation or person exist. We are in danger from falling away from the grace of GOD...as a nation and as individuals. We are not exempt from this truth...let it be understood. Place your faith in GOD and not in your own works or ideals if you desire not to become yet another example in history of a nation born with justice and truth only to fall by corruption and the lies of Satan.

So, let’s turn away from our sinful ways and repent as a nation and as individuals. America needs to be born again and seek forgiveness from GOD for its transgressions. Let’s not allow good intentions to stay simply as intentions, let’s pray that GOD helps us make them good actions. We all need to repent and awake from the slavery that Satan has secretly placed us in. He lied to Eve, who lied

to Adam, who lied to GOD...let us break this cycle and come back to our loving Father's arms in heaven. He loves us all as His children yet we have turned our backs on our Father with our sinful ways.

Please understand...I love this country and no nation has done more for the good of the world than this land we have been blessed with. It takes in the poor of the world and offers them something so simple, yet so many nations lack it...Opportunity. Yet, again...we are not exempt from falling away from the grace of GOD. If we continue to mistake freedom for anarchy by promoting lifestyles or actions that transgress the ways of GOD we will become yet another example of history. Understand this...

GOD is real, he created everything, and He loves us more than we know.

JESUS CHRIST is the Messiah and by His sacrifice can we be forgiven of our sins.

REPENT, seek forgiveness, and be baptized for we have all fallen short of the grace of GOD.

UNDERSTAND, Satan is real and seeks your destruction ...no love exists in him.

America...Israel...all nations, acknowledge your condition, seek forgiveness, and give your hearts of stone to GOD so He can bless you with a heart of flesh.

Remember this, nations of the world who think that by your own hands your nations exist.

Daniel 2:20-21

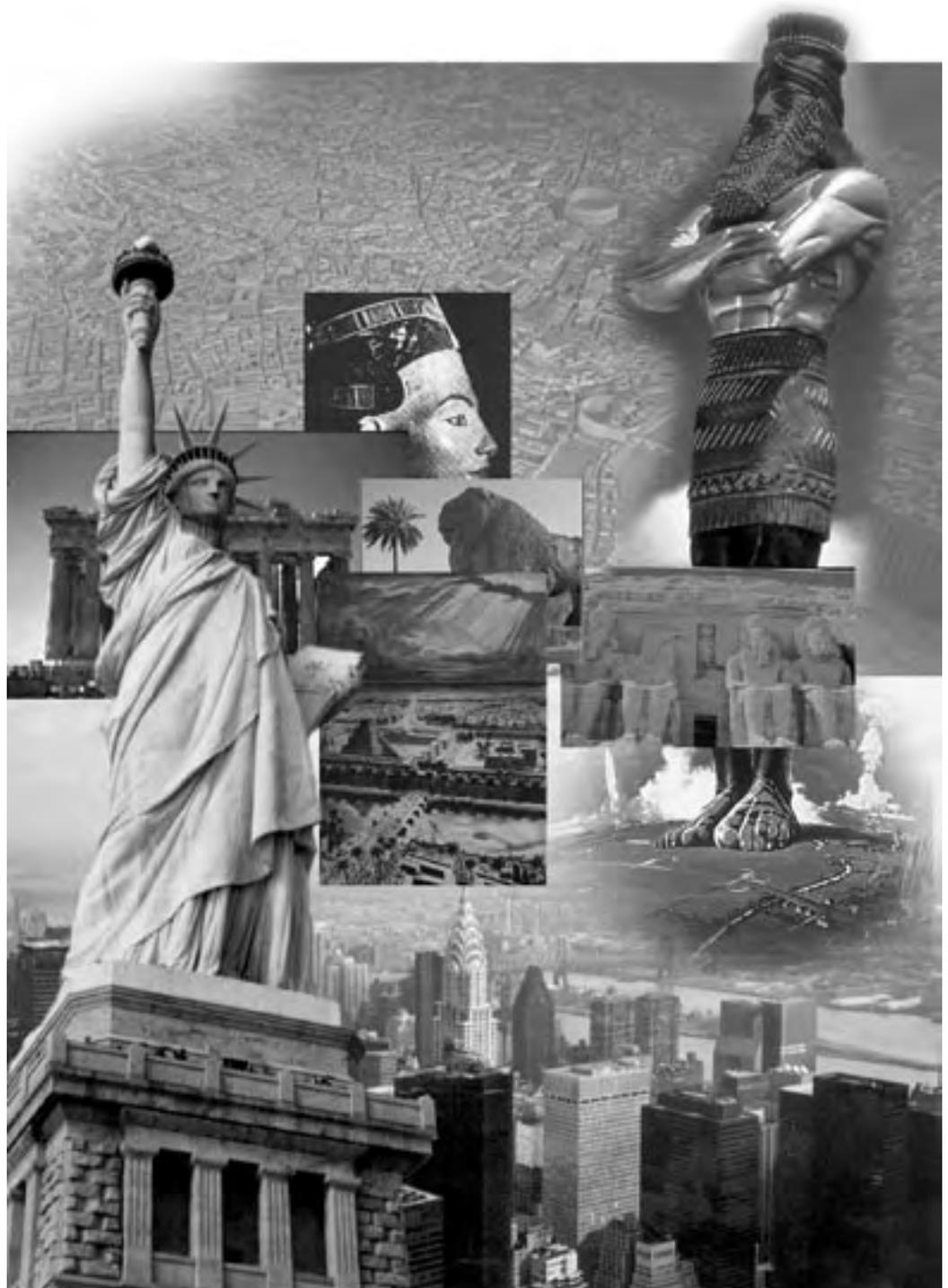
"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His:"

"And He changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:"

Forgive us all loving Father in heaven for we have all transgressed Your ways! Those who believe can hold fast to the sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST our Savior who on the cross gave us all the opportunity for forgiveness.

GOD BLESS US ALL...IN JESUS GREAT NAME I PRAY...AMEN!!!

Joshua Martinez



Imparted Righteousness

Imparted righteousness is the continuation of imputed righteousness. Many have a wrong concept of how to gain salvation and righteousness. Martin Luther, in order to obtain salvation, beat himself. I have seen many Catholics walk or crawl up a stairway to obtain this. If you come to Montreal I will take you to St. Joseph's Cathedral to see how many walk in order to obtain this. But it doesn't happen like that. Justification takes place in a moment by faith. When we are justified, right at that moment all our sins are forgiven. Christ addressed this issue and compared it to a wedding garment. This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isa. 64:6. Everything that we do by ourselves is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." Sin is defined to be "the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:5, 4. Because it is woven in the loom of heaven and not even one thread has human devising found in it. This is the perfection of Christ. This He explained to his disciples. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

When you take a computer and you link that computer to two providers, one can be a metaphorical Satan, and the other provider God. Essentially, there are two masters: Satan and God. If we choose to follow Satan you can drink, smoke or anything you want. However, if you log on to God or the righteousness provider, you can perform great deeds by imitating Christ's

character. This is obtained by our complete surrender to God. Some scientists believe that in our genes we carry certain tendencies to do evil. This is our being.

One time one of my closest friend Bro. Andrew Barash told me he was with a young boy, five years old in the supermarket. When he was passing the counter, the boy looked every side and right away stole a chocolate bar and put in his pocket. Luckily he saw this boy because he had taken this boy with him. If caught he would have been responsible for him so he told him not to do it again. You don't need to teach your children to do evil. They are born with this nature.

First when they invented computers (automatic electronic machine for calculating) in the 1940 they called them cybernetics. Cybernetics means "the science of communication and control theory that is concerned especially with the comparative study of automatic control systems." According to scientists they call the human brain Psycho Cybernetics. Our brain works through biochemical processes but the computer works through two D.C. voltages in variation. It can be 5 volts & 12 volts or a similar fashion. These two voltages are defined as one as 0 and the other as 1. This theory was first developed by Boolean in the 1840's. They were called Boolean Algebra but never materialized until the 1940's. Why I write to you explaining about computers is because computers and our brain function in a similar fashion. If you take a today's powerful computer and install a networking card inside and then install a powerful software (NT) the computer will function as a server.

Now you can hook up (it depends on how much rights you purchase from the manufacture) 99 or more computers to this server and it will give simultaneous access to all the systems the software uses as well as the hardware, ie. Printers, scanners, etc.

Now sister White and the Bible talks about "as the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enabling." COL Pg.333 How can our will become omnipotent? Exactly as I mentioned, by linking to the server computer, the workstation becomes exactly like the server. Rather than buying 99 computers they just create one server and now all of them function as the server. Now all our thoughts and everything we do should go through the spirit of God. He is prompting us. Christ's righteousness is given to us in a moment and then by the power of God, which transforms us, begins a lifetime process. The process is called imparted righteousness.

Often people confuse imparted and imputed righteousness. If you are not converted you are fooled by Satan. The sanctification set forth in the Sacred Scriptures has to do with the entire being--spirit, soul, and body. Here is the true idea of entire consecration. Paul prays that the church at Thessalonica may enjoy this great blessing. "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.

There is in the religious world a

theory of sanctification which is false in itself and dangerous in its influence. In many cases those who profess sanctification do not possess the genuine article. Their sanctification consists in talk and will worship. Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects. When persons claim that they are sanctified, they give sufficient evidence that they are far from being holy. They fail to see their own weakness and destitution. They look upon themselves as reflecting the image of Christ, because they have no true knowledge of Him. The greater the distance between them and their Saviour, the more righteous they appear in their own eyes.

While with penitence and humble trust we meditate upon Jesus, whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we may learn to walk in His footsteps. By beholding Him we become changed into His divine likeness. And when this work is wrought in us, we shall claim no righteousness of our own, but shall exalt Jesus Christ, while we hang our helpless souls upon His merits. Many think falsely that they are sanctified. However, God is not with these individuals and they are fooling themselves. Many who profess sanctification are entirely ignorant of the work of grace upon the heart. When proved and tested, they are found to be like the self-righteous Pharisee. They will bear no contradiction. They lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their claims to sanctification

upon emotions which they have at some time experienced. They are stubborn and perverse in urging their tenacious claims of holiness, giving many words, but bearing no precious fruit as proof. These professedly sanctified persons are not only deluding their own souls by their pretensions, but are exerting an influence to lead astray many who earnestly desire to conform to the will of God. They may be heard to reiterate again and again, "God leads me! God teaches me! I am living without sin!" Many who come in contact with this spirit encounter a dark, mysterious something which they cannot comprehend. But it is that which is altogether unlike Christ, the only true pattern.

Bible sanctification does not consist in strong emotion. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own sinful tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful. There are those claiming sanctification who make a profession of the truth, like their brethren, and it may be difficult to make a distinction between them; but the difference exists, nevertheless. The testimony of those claiming such an exalted experience will cause the sweet Spirit of Christ to withdraw from a meeting, and will leave a chilling influence upon those present, while if they were truly living without sin, their very presence would bring holy angels into the assembly, and their words would indeed be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11).

It is Christ who said, "Truly truly, I say unto thee that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee that you must be born again." Now if we are born of the spirit we have something different. The Holy Spirit is imparted into us. When you see the wind blowing and the tree shakes, surely it is blowing towards right and left. When the Holy Spirit is imputed to us, we start to do the work of God. Everyone that was evil hated the light. When we go closer to God, new things happen. People need God's righteousness in order to become the light of the world and we manifest the true spirit of God. Our nature completely changes when Christ's righteousness is imputed. This is why Christ spoke to his disciples and said, "Don't worry on the last day because the spirit of God will speak to you." When we surrender to him, he will take over for us. When righteousness is imputed unto us, an important change comes over us. It is as if you are in a dark room that is suddenly illuminated. The darkness is taken away.

Similarly, we cannot have two masters. We must choose between the light and the darkness. Hence, between God and Satan. When imputed righteousness comes to our soul, we become enlightened and can light up the world. This powerful light cannot be hidden. Wherever a Christian goes, his character shines through. However, you cannot be a Christian if you wish to follow a sinful path. However, our soul is sinful in nature. God is aware of this. Yet, God still offers this righteousness to us despite our nature. When this transformation takes place, it is almost miraculous and when a person receives God's righteousness, he should guard his soul from the clutches of Satan. God is constantly protecting us and does not allow a Christian to perish. Because of God's sacrifice, we can be for-

given. God's gift is imputed to us and only he has the power to impart this unto us.

Imparted righteousness also makes significant changes to a human soul. When a soul is justified it must produce fruit. If no fruit is produced, the tree (metaphorical) will be condemned. Sometimes, people who claim to be close to God do not accept the truth and go their own way. Christ encourages us that those who have been called and have had righteousness imputed unto them should do the work as prompted by the Holy Spirit. For instance, in Matthew 25 He says, "For the Kingdom of Heaven is as a man travelling the country who called upon His servants and gave them His goods." These servants should now use these talents. However, some people do not use their talents. If God gives us a talent we must make good use of it. Our talents include our vocal abilities, our healing abilities, Higher Education, speech, influence, time, health, strength, money, kindly impulses and affections etc.

Many feel that you don't need to be educated because God will finish His work with uneducated people. This is a wrong statement. See what the spirit of prophesy says concerning this, "If placed under the control of His Spirit, the more thoroughly the intellect is cultivated, the more effectively it can be used in the service of God. The uneducated man who is consecrated to God and who longs to bless others can be, and is, used by the Lord in His service. But those who, with the same spirit of consecration, have had the benefit of a thorough education, can do a much more extensive work for Christ. They stand on vantage ground. The Lord desires us to obtain all the education possible, with the object in view of imparting our knowledge to others. None can know where or how they may be called to labor or to speak for God. Our heavenly Father alone sees what He can make of

men. There are before us possibilities which our feeble faith does not discern. Our minds should be so trained that if necessary we can present the truths of His word before the highest earthly authorities in such a way as to glorify His name. We should not let slip even one opportunity of qualifying ourselves intellectually to work for God."

And then she speaks about speech. "The power of speech is a talent that should be diligently cultivated. Of all the gifts we have received from God, none is capable of being a greater blessing than this. With the voice we convince and persuade, with it we offer prayer and praise to God, and with it we tell others of the Redeemer's love. How important, then, that it be so trained as to be most effective for good. The culture and right use of the voice are greatly neglected, even by persons of intelligence and Christian activity. There are many who read or speak in so low or so rapid a manner that they cannot be readily understood. Some have a thick, indistinct utterance; others speak in a high key, in sharp, shrill tones, that are painful to the hearers. Texts, hymns, and the reports and other papers presented before public assemblies are sometimes read in such a way that they are not understood and often so that their force and impressiveness are destroyed. This is an evil that can and should be corrected. On this point the Bible gives instruction. Of the Levites who read the Scriptures to the people in the days of Ezra, it is said, "They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." Neh. 8:8.

'By diligent effort all may acquire the power to read intelligibly, and to speak in a full, clear, round tone, in a distinct and impressive manner. By doing this we may greatly increase our efficiency as workers for Christ. Every Christian is called to make

known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ; therefore he should seek for perfection in speech. He should present the word of God in a way that will commend it to the hearers. God does not design that His human channels shall be uncouth. It is not His will that man shall belittle or degrade the heavenly current that flows through him to the world. We should look to Jesus, the perfect pattern; we should pray for the aid of the Holy Spirit, and in His strength we should seek to train every organ for perfect work. Especially is this true of those who are called to public service. Every minister and every teacher should bear in mind that he is giving to the people a message that involves eternal interests. The truth spoken will judge them in the great day of final reckoning. And with some souls the manner of the one delivering the message will determine its reception or rejection. Then let the word be so spoken that it will appeal to the understanding and impress the heart. Slowly, distinctly, and solemnly should it be spoken, yet with all the earnestness which its importance demands." COL Pg. 333 – 335.

Often speakers who have no talent take a sermon and make the whole church sleep. And all of these talents are meant for us to use to glorify God. We must do our duty. If not, God will condemn us. We must be aware that when righteousness is imputed to us that our talents should be put to good use. Christ says, "When the son of man should come in his glory and all his holy angels with him then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory and before him shall be gathered all nations and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right side but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For

I was an hungered and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them,

wealth bind us to Satan. These bonds must be broken. We are not God's children unless we are entirely. When Christ dwells in the heart Satan will be forgotten. Those who feel the love of God aim at perfect conformity. When we are given imputed and imparted righteousness then we are to bear fruit. Christ discusses this in Luke 6:43-46. "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit." The good man out of the

When God's spirit is given to us, we produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

John 15 states, "I am the true vine and my Father is the husband man. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean to the word I have spoken unto you. Abide in me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abided in the vine. No more can ye except ye abide in me. I am that vine. Ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abideth not in me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered."



Verily I say unto you inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

Christ is very clear here. He is asking us to show mercy to the poor and to those who are in prison. We need to be merciful. Christ says that everything we do for humanity we do unto him. If we don't show mercy to those around us we are not doing God's will. God wants us to imitate him. When righteousness is imputed we begin to understand God. Hence the Savior says, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath he cannot be my disciple."(Luke 14:33).

The love of money and the desire of

treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good. The evil man out of the treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil. Christ says that we should strive to be perfect like God.

In Galatians 5 It states that the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, temperance, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, and meekness. Therefore, we clearly see Christ's nature. Exodus 34 states, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth." This is how God is described. When God's righteousness is imparted, we become this way. When imputed righteousness is given, all of our sins are cancelled in heaven.

We must abide in Christ and if we stay close to him we bring forth much fruit. Our fruits are subsequently manifested to the world. The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed. The righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven. The second is our fitness for heaven. The righteousness of Christ alone can give you power to resist the tide of evil sweeping over the world. God is trying to create a perfect Christian character in us. In order to do this we must comply with God's commandments and should not be deceived by our own misconstrued conceptions. Without a doubt, God loves you. If you surrender yourself to God you shall be given imputed righteousness. If you are truly sanctified you will produce the fruits. Our fruits are the results of God's spirit working in the human soul. So I hope you will produce much fruits. God bless you!

Amen.

**Augustus Ratneiyya
Montreal Canada**

A New Year—A New Page in Life

A new year has started. A new leaf in the time-book of earth's history. What are we going to make of this new year? Whatever we do I hope everyone will make better use of their time than ever before. We are one year closer to Jesus coming and a step nearer to heaven. Time is closing for this earth.

Shall we not in this new year seek to correct the errors of the past? It behooves us individually to cultivate the grace of Christ, to be meek and lowly of heart, to be firm, unwavering, steadfast in the truth; for thus only can we advance in holiness, and be made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light. Let us begin the year with an entire renunciation of self; let us pray for clear discernment, that we may understand our Saviour's claims upon us, and that we may always and everywhere be witnesses for Christ (Signs of the Times, Jan. 4, 1883). {Lift Him Up p.15}

As you enter upon a new year, let it be with an earnest resolve to have your course onward and upward. Let your life be more elevated and exalted than it has hitherto been. Make it your aim not to seek your own interest and pleasure, but to advance the cause of your Redeemer. Remain not in a position where you ever need help yourself, and where others have to guard you to keep you in the narrow way. You may be strong to exert a sanctifying influence upon others. You may be where your soul's interest will be awakened to do good to others, to comfort the sorrowful, strengthen the weak, and to bear your testimony for Christ whenever opportunity offers. Aim to honor God in everything, always and everywhere. Carry your religion into everything. {My Life Today p.369}

A new year of our life has started. A new page is turned in the book of the recording angel. What will be recorded

upon its pages? Shall it be marked with neglect of God, with unfulfilled duties? God forbid. Let a record be written there which we will not be ashamed to have revealed to all men and angels. Let us seek to move ever onward and upwards. Let us put aside everything that might keep us from entering heaven. Let us keep our eyes upon Jesus lest we sink amid the cares of this world.

Let us enter upon the new year with a clean record. Let faults be corrected. Let bitterness and malice be uprooted. Let right triumph over wrong. Let envy and jealousy between brethren be put away. Heartfelt, honest confession will heal grave difficulties. Then, with the love of God in the soul, there may flow from sincere lips the greeting, "I wish you a happy New Year." {RH, January 3, 1882 par. 8}

Let us begin the new year by offering praise and thanksgiving to God, with the determination, through His grace, to consecrate our talents to His service. The love of God in the hearts of the members of the church will give them joy and peace and gladness, enabling them to live lives that will cause rejoicing among the angels of God.

Will my brethren now arouse to do their work? The signs reveal to us that "the night cometh, in which no man can work." The time is coming in which you can neither buy nor sell. That will be a serious time for the people of God. Now you can sell and give alms. Now you can send your treasure before you into heaven, and God calls for your means to advance his cause. Let this Christmas-time and the entering in of a new year testify to the zeal of God's people. There has been a withholding from God of tithes and offerings. The question is asked, "Will a man rob God?" And the answer comes, "Ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have

we robbed thee?--In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Wonderful statement, and how true! Shall we humble our souls before God, and confess our sin in robbing him? Shall we be zealous and repent? Shall we redeem the failures of the past? "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Shall we obey God, and bring in all our tithes and offerings, that there may be meat to supply the demands of souls hungering for the bread of life? God invites you to prove him now, as the old year draws to its close, and let the new year find us with God's treasures replenished. Let us literally prove the Lord, by bringing all the tithes and offerings into his store house, and let us repent of our robbery toward him. He tells us that he will open the windows of heaven, and pour us out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. He pledges his word, "I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field saith the Lord of hosts" Thus his word is our assurance that he will so bless us that we shall have still larger tithes and offerings to bestow. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts." {RH, December 18, 1888 par. 19}

I wish you a happy new year. Let us put away everything like distrust and want of faith in Jesus forever. Let us commence a life of simple child-like trust, not relying upon feeling but upon faith, and 'lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before us.' AMEN.

Ben Dammasch

Queensland, Australia

THE WELL



Randy Gil lived in central Arkansas, a beautiful part of the United States with lush rolling hills, shrouded by tall trees. It is a land where a purple haze hangs in the deep pockets in the woods, where on a warm summer night a myriad of fireflies blink and flicker like distant star fields. It is a land pungent with the aroma of an approaching thunderstorm – thick with moisture blowing up from the Gulf of Mexico. It was on this land that Randy Gil was born.

Randy's father, Harold, migrated to the area in the late 1950's from North Carolina. Before long he and his wife had two sons, Randy and Tom.

Tom, the older son, worked in town. He had his own business running an automotive repair shop and was doing quite well at it.

Young Randy had other dreams. He loved the out-of-doors. His ambition was to become the best logger in the county. He worked at perfecting his chain-saw technique by cutting pulp wood for a local mill.

Randy was a tall man, just over 2 metres in height. He was also very stout – not fat or flabby, but hefty. He had muscles all over, weighing about 110 kg. He always wore a T-shirt and overalls. His young face was chubby and round and his cheeks were always rosy.

Even with all this mass, Randy was a gentle and tender-hearted person. Born in the rolling hill country of central Arkansas, he always prided himself in being honest beyond question and hard working. "My father always taught me to first pay my tithes, then pay my bills and never tell a lie," he said with a large smile on his face. His father was never

disappointed and he continued to be a regular attendant at the local church every weekend where his parents had taken him since he was a child.

Randy lived with his parents and was happy with his logging trade. Then one day he met Cindy. She worked in the local grocery store. Randy began to get serious and visited the grocery store more often than he needed groceries. He dropped 10 kg's and bought some new clothing.

After several years they agreed to get married.

Several months before their wedding date, Randy began preparing a home for his bride. His father gave him five acres of ground across the road as a wedding gift. It would be his own land, clear and free. He busily began cutting trees and building a house. Then came the time to dig the well. The Acme Drilling company came out and gave Randy an estimate for the drilling. They wanted \$900 to drill a 20 metre well, but Randy didn't want to spend the money.

He was sure that the water was not so far below the surface and rather than spend the money, or ask his father's advice, he decided to dig the well himself.

He asked a friend, James Lewis to come and help. He was sure the water was only 6 metres down since that is how far his father's well was across the road.

When his father heard of the plan he was sceptical. "Son, that seems like a big and dangerous job digging down in a hole in the ground, you should

ask Acme to do it. I know it is expensive, but if we think and pray about it, perhaps we can come up with another plan."

But Randy didn't want to take time to seek the Lord and try to think of a plan. He was determined to do it his way and to do it now, so he began early the next morning. Armed with picks and shovels, buckets and winches, they attacked the earth. Flailing, grunting, sweating, digging, they continued to dig deeper and deeper into the ground. Down, down, down they went.

Another friend stopped by around 4 o'clock to see how they were doing. He peered into the pit only to see a red-faced Randy looking back up. "How deep are you?" asked the friend.

"I think about 3 metres," he puffed, wiping the sweat from his brow. "I'll tell you one thing though, it's hotter than a fire coal down here!"

James Lewis was not in the pit. It was his job to pull up the buckets of dirt as Randy filled them.

About the same time the next day, this same friend stopped by again to see the progress. There was Randy, down in the hole, sweating, and James Lewis looking on from above, doing his job with the buckets. "Hey, Randy, how far down are you now?"

"I figure about 4.5 metres now," he grinned, "But don't worry, we're going to hit water any minute now."

While he was talking a large chunk of the dirt sidewall broke loose and tumbled down onto Randy.

“Randy,” hollered his friend. “You’d better be careful. These walls are liable to collapse on you and bury you alive.”

“No, don’t worry. Everything is under control.”

It was the third day of digging on the site, about 8:00 A.M. and the friend was heading down to the post office, right past Randy’s place, so he decided to pull off the road and go and take another look.

“That’s funny,” he thought to himself. “Where are Randy and James Lewis? Usually by this time they’ve been digging for a couple of hours. But no one’s around. Where can they be?”

Then it was that he heard a strange unearthly sound. It was sort of like a faint human voice off in the distance. He listened and craned his neck in the direction of the noise. It sounded like someone calling for help. He walked in the direction of the voice, and finally came to the well.

As he looked down into the miry pit and there was Randy, covered with mud, slumped against the wall of the well. He was close to exhaustion, and nearly hoarse from calling for help.

His friend cupped his hands to his mouth and shouted, “You, down there! Randy, are you all right?”

“Big K, is that you?” he said weakly, as he gazed up at the circle of light above.

“Yes, Randy, what are you doing down there? Where is James Lewis?”

“Just get me out of here and I’ll explain,” came his reply.

Big K ran across the road and got Randy’s father and his brother. They lowered a rope, and Randy tied it around himself. Then they pulled the large man out of the soggy pit.

He lay flat on his back like a beached whale, gasping for breath. Then, in a few seconds, he propped himself upon his elbows and exclaimed, “Whew! Boy, am I glad to see you all.”

“What happened, Son?” asked his father, bending over him.

“Well, last night after James Lewis left,” Randy began, “I came out with my flashlight to see if water was collecting in the well. Anyway, the dirt on one side of the hole gave way, and I fell down there.”

“You mean to tell me you’ve been in that hole all night?” asked Big K.

“That’s right. And I’m extremely hoarse from yelling and tired from trying to climb up out of here.”

“I guess so,” said his father. “Now will you listen to reason? You can’t dig that well yourself. It’s far too dangerous. Until you have enough money to pay for Acme to come and dig your well, I’ll get some pipe and run you some water from my well across the road.”

“That suits me fine!” said Randy. So, in the end, Randy and James Lewis filled in the well. All that remained of the venture were a few railroad ties used to mount the pulleys, still sticking

out of the ground.

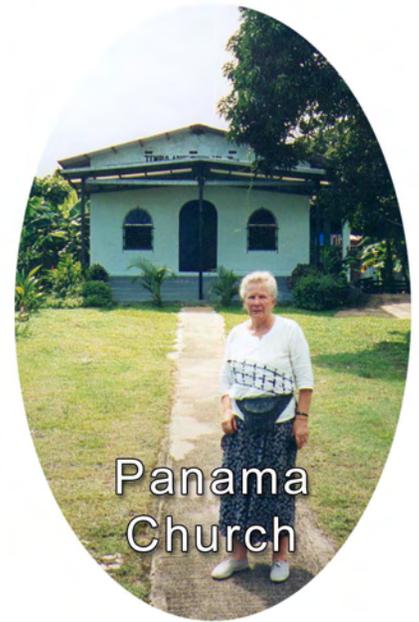
Later, after Randy showered and cleaned, he was chatting with Big K, “Now I know what Joseph felt like when his brothers put him in the pit. It was really scary there for awhile, but the worst part about my experience is that it was my own fault. I trapped myself. I dug a pit and fell into it. I refused to listen to advice and decided I would do things my own way. It was harder than I thought.”

How often this happens to us in our spiritual lives. We are unwilling to listen to our heavenly Father, and we become hopelessly trapped by our own foolish sins. We fall into quagmires of our own making. The more we struggle to escape, the more tired and frustrated we become and the more we become covered with the mud of unrighteousness. Exhausted, we succumb to the realization that unless we get help from above, we are doomed.

It is only when our Friend from above lowers the lifeline that we can be saved. There is no other way to be saved, except by Jesus. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12. All you have to do is grab the rope that He lowers and He will lift you out.

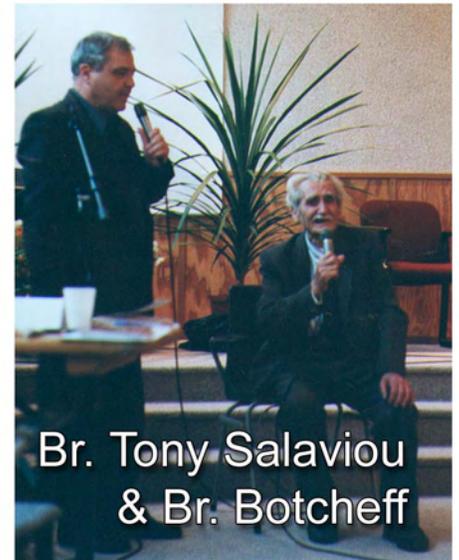


Br. Roy Miranda & Sis. Mactavish



Panama Church

Br. Dering
Vancouver Evangelization Seminar



Br. Tony Salaviou
& Br. Botcheff



Br. S. Raj Israel Conducts Prayer Meeting

One Precious Boon

- ① One precious boon, O LORD, I seek,
While tossed upon 'life's billowy sea';
To hear a voice within me speak,
"Thy Saviour is well pleased with thee."
- ② Earth's scoffs & scorn well pleased I'll bear,
Nor mourn though underfoot I'm trod,
If day by day I may but share
Thine approbation, O my GOD!
- ③ The friends I love may turn from me,
Their words unkind may pierce me through;
But this my daily prayer shall be,
"FORGIVE"; they know not what they do."
- ④ Let me but know, wherever I roam,
That I am doing JESUS' will;
And though I've neither friends nor home,
My heart shall glow with gladness still.
- ⑤ To that bright, blest, immortal morn,
By holy prophets long foretold,
My eager, longing eyes I turn,
And soon its glories shall behold.
- ⑥ Then all the scoffs and scorn I've borne
For His dear sake Who died for me,
To everlasting joys will turn,
In glorious immortality.

~Charles Fitch

