

The Reformation
Messenger
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WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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Rooted In Christ

“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” Psalm 92:12

“They plant their roots deep among the rocks of the mountains and boldly stand in defiance of the tempest.”
—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 450

“The Christian is likened to the cedar of Lebanon. I have read that this tree does more than send down a few short roots into the yielding loam. It sends strong roots deep down into the earth, and strikes down farther and still farther in search of a still stronger hold. And in the fierce blast of the tempest, it stands firm, held by its network of cables beneath.

“So the Christian strikes root deep into Christ. He has faith in his Redeemer. He knows in whom he believes. He is fully persuaded that Jesus is the Son of God and the Saviour of sinners. . . . The roots of faith strike deep down. Genuine Christians, like the cedar of Lebanon, do not grow in the soft surface soil, but are rooted in God, riveted in the clefts of the mountain rocks.

“If the Christian thrives and progresses at all, he must do so amid strangers to God, amid scoffing, subject to ridicule. He must stand upright like the palm tree in the desert. The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm tree’s roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep

beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 112

“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3

“Of all the trees, the Scotch fir tree is one of the best from which Christians may draw inspiring lessons. The Scotch fir requires less soil for its roots than any other tree. In a dry soil and amidst barren rocks it finds sufficient nourishment to keep it as green in the winter as in the summer. With the least amount of earth about its roots, it towers above all the other trees of the wood, reaching the highest toward heaven. . . .

“The church members who are standing in their lot and place are trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord. Although their surrounding circumstances may be adverse, yet, like the fir tree with little soil about its roots, they constantly reach heavenward, drawing nourishment from above. Like the fragrant boughs of the fir tree, they impart grace for grace received. The hidden nourishment that comes from God is returned to Him in purest service. . . . God calls for every man’s best energies. No man can find in any human being the strength that will enable him to serve God with all his powers. He must be a partaker of the divine nature.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 259

Ellen G. White

The Awesome Power of Holy Men of God

A golden compass and an open book are placed on a rocky surface. The compass is open, showing its face with cardinal and intercardinal directions. The book is open to a page with text. The background is a close-up of rough, grey rock.

“The just man walketh in his integrity.” Proverbs 20:7. “We must have responsible men, and we want men that shall stand just as true as the compass to the pole.” – Spalding and Magan Collection, p. 165

“And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.” 2 Kings 4: 8–10

We live in a dispensation when people pursue power without seeking the necessary prerequisites for attaining it. A close examination of scripture gives us a glimpse of the secrets behind the exploits of the great men and women of past generations. Learning from them will enable us to attain to their spiritual heights of divine possibilities. Since God is unchanging, His demands are unchanging, also. His standard remains the same whatever the prevalent circumstances may be in any period of history.

Holiness and power are inseparably linked together and one cannot exist without the other. A holy man is a man who lives by the awesome power of God. His comportment, look, and demeanour, carry the very presence of God. Such a man may be difficult to find, but can be easily recognized as he looks and acts different from the world.

Elisha was referred to as “an holy man of God” by the Shunammite woman. Merely seeing the prophet pass through the street, the woman was convinced of Elisha’s spiritual worth. Who else could have been so described? Elisha was a man who had great influence in the entire nation of Israel as a prophet. So amazing was his influ-

ence that after his death his bones raised a dead man to life (2 Kings 13:20–21). His testimony, influence and power outlived him.

The phrase “man of God” is used in scripture for men of proven integrity, purity and probity; men of conviction about the standard of God’s word; men who stood for God in spite of the prevalent corruptions and compromises of their age. Moses, David, Elijah, Elisha, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul and a host of other men had excellent spiritual track records.

Our usefulness in life and service hinges on our testimony of holy living and righteous conduct. Every servant of God must comprehend the challenge of a godly example as true ambassadors of Christ. The demand of leadership is primarily that of character rather than charisma. God is interested in those who wanting to be leaders in service for Him. Sin must be avoided as a plague and righteousness embraced as a spouse.

It is interesting to know that the ultimate purpose of scripture is, “That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Timothy 3: 17. Paul further states, “But godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8. Godly Bible characters had the power to live a holy lifestyle. The impact they had on their generation ought to be a challenge to New Testament believers, and ministers of the gospel, in particular. It takes holiness and tenacity of purpose to become a true servant of God and to continue as an overcomer—to live the Christian life that influences others positively for life and eternity.

An unstoppable determination for God's holiness ought to be the resolve of every servant of God and minister of the gospel. We must determine to be absolutely and entirely for God and Him alone. An absolute and irrevocable surrender to God is the secret of becoming a man after God's own heart. When we do, the consequence is awesome power with incredible influence.

INTEGRITY AND HOLY CHARACTER OF THE HOLY PEOPLE OF GOD

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." 2 Corinthians 7:1-2

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Hebrews 12:4

Simply defined, integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. Personal integrity is indispensable to a healthy spiritual life. Ministers are to be "beacon of lights" to their followers; but when they are caught in the web of moral pollution and corruption, their testimony is soiled and their impact diminished. Without a good character, there is no trust. God cannot trust us with His power. Successful characters in the scripture were men and women of integrity. With integrity, we have nothing to fear because there is nothing to hide.

DAVID: When David prayed, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on Thee" (Psalms 25:21), it was a prayer of great significance. It is integrity that opens the way to ministerial privileges. And if we are to remain in the ministry, we must continue in the same. This is the reason for the uniqueness of this prayer. Integrity is the preserving virtue of gospel ministers.

JOB: God testified of Job as a man of integrity. "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity." Job 2:3

Then said his wife unto him, you are still as faithful as ever, why don't you "Curse God and die;" and Job said "You are talking like a foolish woman, when God sends us something good, we welcome it. How can we complain when He sends us trouble?" In spite of everything he suffered, Job said nothing against God. Here we have the components of integrity—perfect, upright, God-fearing. Godly fear helps us to shun all evil whether in private or public. To fear God is to hate evil. God testified of the godly qualities in Job's life.

SAMUEL: Samuel, the upright Judge of Israel, towered high among his equals in his generation. His open submission to Israel's public scrutiny is a great challenge to all servants of God in all ages. The whole nation of Israel testified, "Thou has not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand." 1 Samuel 12:4. We must build a foundation of righteousness within a soul; cultivate and water it daily through prayerful meditation in the Word. Also, we need to constantly wait upon the Lord for spiritual renewal and watch against lukewarmness. Holiness must characterize all the fabrics of our being. It must be our watchword as well as our lifestyle.

JOSEPH: Joseph said "No" to adultery, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" In Genesis 39:7-10, Joseph called the proposition wickedness and said it was sin against God. That was integrity.

DANIEL: "But they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." Daniel 6:4. We are not going to find anything of which to accuse Daniel unless it is something in connection with his religion.

ELISHA: "As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused." 2 Kings 5:16. Naaman insisted that he accept the gifts, but he would not. Elisha declined Naaman's gifts.

SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO: They answered and said to the king, "we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Daniel 3:16, 18

These three Hebrew men maintained their holiness and integrity despite the threat of death in the fiery furnace. Likewise we, as servants of God should, also remain strong in our faith in God. No matter what we are facing we should know that God is able to deliver us in such a difficult situation like this.

Men of integrity are men of good conscience, of godly character, and gracious conduct. They are growing in carefulness and gospel conversion, wearing the garment of chastity, and their characters reflect godliness and Christlikeness. In both scripture Testaments we see these men and women with glowing testimonies. The same grace they had is still available for us today.

A life of untainted integrity is a possibility. God's will is that the life of His Son be made manifest in us. His divine nature is promised to all His children.

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Problems in Life

**“The LORD hath utterly separated me from His people: . . .
Behold, I am a dry tree.” Isaiah 56:3**

Most people have some problem which spoils their happiness and makes them sad and worried. Their problems may be sickness, loss of a friend, lack of money, lack of necessities, loneliness, weakness, burden of sin, guilty conscience, or it could be their husband, or wife. Their problem could be an unpleasant duty; something that they do not enjoy doing. Whatever it is, it spoils their happiness. Many people suffer with their problems all through their lives, and carry them to their graves. This it is not necessary because to every problem there is a remedy, or solution. The good old Bible has all the answers; it has never let anyone down who has followed its counsel. There is a medicine for every difficulty but many refuse to take this medicine. Therefore they remain in their miserable condition. Many are seeking for a remedy, but from the wrong place, and therefore they never find it. There are people who continue in their unhappy existence, without doing anything about it. These kinds of people are those in the Laodicean condition. They say, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” While the True Witness says, “that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:17. They are not happy. They can pretend to be happy, but it is not genuine.

The Jewish people were satisfied in their misery. They claimed to be righteous and whole; that they had no needs or no wants. Therefore they had no need of a physician. Yet they were sick, spiritually dead, blind, and miserable.

Let us study a few of the problems that people have.

THE BURDEN OF SIN

Sin brings guilty feelings and remorse. If no remedy is applied, it will lead to hardening of heart, and to separation from God and the church. We find the remedy in

Isaiah 1:18–19. “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”

Forgiveness is freely offered, but we must confess our sins to God, and to him against whom we have sinned. If you have stolen from God in tithes and offerings, then return them to Him. Do not sell your happiness for a few dollars of gain. If you have stolen from the government of your country by not paying your taxes, then pay them because this also would take your happiness away. If you have spoken a lie, then confess it quickly—remember what happened to Ananias and Sapphira when they lied to the church? Who are the biggest liars? Are they not the ministers of the fallen churches, who offer salvation to the people, while teaching them to disobey God’s commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment, and also the sixth commandment? They encourage the young men to join the army, to kill the enemy, when Jesus said that we must love our enemies, and do good to them?

HOW TO OVERCOME SIN

Alone we cannot overcome sin; we need God’s help to overcome sin. He has promised to help us, but we must do our part. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

Not from *some* unrighteousness, but from *all*. We must say, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13

This means full surrender, complete and unconditional. This promise of *all* includes little petty sins also, which

are often overlooked, and the sins of neglected duty—the sin which the servant who had one talent committed.

PROBLEM OF LONELINESS

For loneliness there is also a remedy given in the Bible. “A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24. A selfish person cannot be genuinely friendly. True friendliness requires sacrifice and unselfish attention. To meet a person for a light small-talk over a restaurant table is not a true friendship that would satisfy anyone. Solomon wrote that there is a friend that is closer than a brother; a friend that gave His life for you, and took your penalty upon Himself. Who is this friend? Is it not Jesus Christ our Saviour? Are there more friends like Him? Yes, the true children of God, in whom the image of God is restored, they also make a friend that satisfies, on whom we can count in the time of need. If we have lost our life partner, then our happiness still continues with these true friends. Jesus was often left alone by people, but He said, “Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.” John 16:32

A person who has opened his heart’s door for Jesus to enter in is never lonely. To feel the presence of God is happiness; also, missionary work is one of the best medicines for loneliness—when we visit people, study with them, comfort them, and pray with them.

PROBLEM OF ANXIETY

If someone has an anxious heart, surrounded by worry and care, there is a remedy for this also. “O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” Isaiah 48:18. Obeying the commandments of God results in a beautiful peace, so calm, and so restful. There is no other remedy for an anxious heart than what God has prescribed for us.

PROBLEM OF LACK

We may be lacking money, a job, car, necessities, or something else important. What has God given us, and what has He promised to give? “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32. But God’s giving depends on the condition that we must fulfil. Jesus said, “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.

For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” Luke 6:38

Let us not forget what the Lord spoke through the prophet Malachi, “Will a man rob God? Yet 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. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, 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. And 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.” Malachi 3:8–11

Also, Jesus said, “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:31–33

God knows that we need food, drink, clothes, shelter, and money, and He will provide all these, if we do our part. There is a bank in heaven where Jesus tells us to put our money. This bank in heaven pays the highest interest of any other bank. If you have an account in this bank, you can ask God in prayer for anything at any time, and He will provide all your needs.

PROBLEM WITH ENEMIES

The best medicine to get rid of enemies is to love them. Jesus said, “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Matthew 5:44

This medicine very few are willing to take. The Syrian army was constantly harassing the people of Israel. Time and time again, they came to war against Israel. They were, at that time, the worst enemies of the nation of Israel. Then one day Elisha led the army of Syrian soldiers right into the camp of Israel, and the king of Israel saw now a golden opportunity to pay back his long time enemy, but what did Elisha ask him to do? “And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that

they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel." 2 Kings 6:21–23. By kindness the continuous war stopped.

The unchangeable law of God says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Galatians 6:7

The problems in our lives, the bitter harvest that we often reap, are the results of our own sowing. We may have sown seeds of selfishness, pride, coldness, or dishonesty and unkindness, and the terrible harvest that we reap as the result of it may cause us to complain and be afraid. We can, however, avoid this terrible harvest by sowing seeds of kindness, seeds of love, seeds of forgiveness, and friendliness.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Romans 12:18

Satan also offers us medicine for our problems. He offers parties, entertainment, alcohol, smoking, drugs, pleasure in sin, and self-indulgence; but instead of healing, he poisons the mind, body, and soul, until the sickness becomes incurable.

There is, however, a place where we can go to and find a remedy for all our problems. "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Jeremiah 8:22

"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:3. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Isaiah 66:13

SUFFERINGS THAT ARE BLESSINGS

God has promised to give us the Holy Spirit, which is the Comforter, and all our problems will be solved. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." Isaiah 45:22. Looking to Jesus we will be relieved from all our problems, and we will be filled with joy and happiness, similar to the joy and happiness that we will have when we are in heaven.

We may have trials of faith, even persecutions, but Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." John 16:33

"For unto you is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Philippians 1:29

Paul said, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities,

in reproaches, in necessities in persecution, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Corinthians 10:12. He took pleasure in persecutions.

God said, whom I love I rebuke and chasten. These are not problems, no. They are blessings to us, to perfect our characters for heaven.

"Of all the gifts that heaven can bestow upon men, fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the most weighty trust and highest honour. Not Enoch, who was translated to heaven, not Elijah, who ascended in a chariot of fire, was greater or more honoured than John the Baptist, who perished alone in the dungeon." –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 479

We should be thankful for these sufferings, as they are not problems. They prove that God loves us and is helping us.

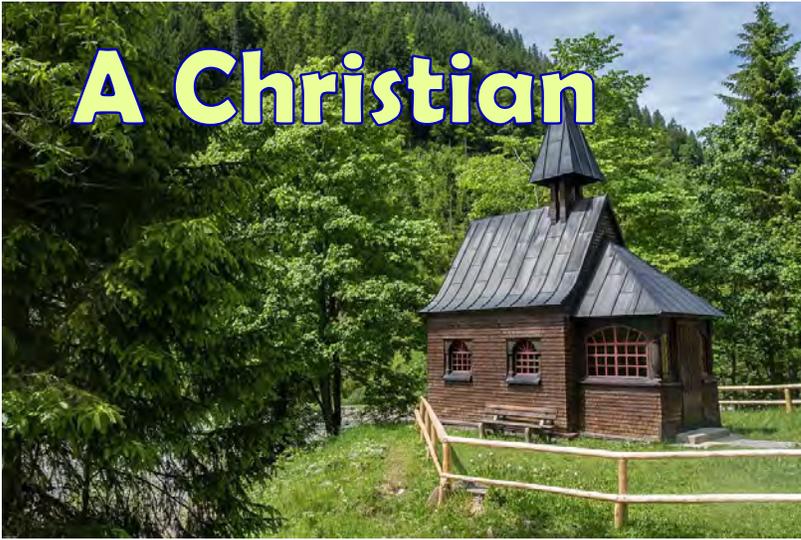
When all our problems are solved and we are filled with the peace and joy of heaven, then we have work to do. We are to help others overcome their problems also. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" Isaiah 58:6–7

Wherever we look, all around us, we see people stooped down under burdens, plagued with problems for which they have found no healing. Go to them in the name of Jesus our Lord, and bring them joy and sunshine to their dark, joyless lives. Become a fountain of living water that will flow into eternal life. Then one day you will hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matthew 25:21 Amen.

Timo Martin



A Christian



The questions are often asked, “Who is a Christian? How do I know a Christian if I meet one? Does Matthew, Luke, or John pass for a Christian? Is everyone who raises up his hand in response to a preacher’s call to repentance a Christian? Does everyone who passes through the church aisle to the altar pass for a Christian? Are all those in church pews during church services Christians? Who is a Christian?” Finally you may ask, “Am I a Christian?”

A soul winner, while doing evangelistic work, met a drunk drifting down a lane. In his attempt to help him discover the true purpose of living, he asked, “Are you a Christian?” The answer came quick and sharp “What do you think I am? A pagan?” This is a pitiful point.

A brilliant preacher, full of energy and zeal got the passing mark of his congregation. But his life at home showed a pattern of pride and jealousy, as found in the fallen angel, Lucifer.

A gifted and talented lady-soloist sings like an angel and pray like a prophet, but she talks and acts with thunder with volcano in her voice. Her red-hot temper, contentiousness, and confusion are marks of her presence at home or at work. Are these Christians? A “Person” of stormy words is an indication of the absence of Christ in the heart.

Being a Christian is not a new label: it is a new life. The word “Christian” first occurred in the New Testament. It was not in the Old Testament. “The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” Acts 11:26. From the first use of a word, the true meaning and significance of the word becomes clear. Disciples were called Christians.

“Disciple” is a prominent word in the New Testament. It did not have any place in the Jewish Religion. One of the disciples in Antioch, referred to as a Christian, was in the Jewish religion (Galatians 1:13) before he became a

Christian. He was living by the Mosaic code of “ordinance, touch not, taste not, handle not.” The ceremonial washing in holy water is ignorance of true discipleship and Christianity. Christianity centers on Jesus Christ—His love, life and light. A Christian, therefore, is a person who lives the life of Christ, as revealed in the New Testament.

The New Testament opens with Jesus Christ who saves from sin (Matthew 1:21) and closes with Jesus Christ, the King who will come quickly (Revelation 22:20). Christ died to make you a Christian. He did not have to die to make you a churchgoer; you can do that on your own. But you cannot overcome sin in your natural human nature. Christ died to suffer

for you—through Christ’s merit, if you confess your sins and ask for pardon and grace, you will be forgiven. Peace and joy will come into your heart. You will never be the same again. Christ died to make you live—through definite faith in His precious Blood, your heart and life are changed. Christ died to reconcile you to God. Through His meritorious sacrifice, a love relationship is established between you and God. Christ died to give you a new heart and a life like His. You can only enjoy a new heart at the expense of the former.

The Christian life radiates the beauty of Christ’s lifestyle—humility, obedience, love, integrity, and newness of life. Check if you are a Christian. Ask yourself, “If not, why not?” “Be not deceived: God is not mocked: For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Galatians 6:7. Remember that “not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21

You can decide to confess your sins to God today and repent—making a wholehearted change in your life. Ask for pardon from God in the name of Jesus, the only one Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5). Believe God in His mercy. Changed and transformed, begin to live a Christian life.

1. Pray every day, especially before you go out in the morning and before you sleep in the evening.
2. Read the Bible every day, especially in the morning before you begin the day and before you sleep in the evening.
3. Fellowship with Bible-believing Christians.
4. Be conscious of the presence of Jesus *at all times*; therefore, do not do whatever will displease Him.

Ebrima John Jaiteh



Sometimes when we are asked to do something that we are uncertain of, we may think of possible ways that things can go wrong. We start to ask, “*what if . . . ?*”

We go to university, but *what if* I don’t have money to complete the course? *What if* the study gets too difficult and I don’t think I can complete the study? *What if . . . ?*

We go on a vacation to a strange country that we have never been to before, but *what if* I miss the plane? *What if* it rains every day? *What if* I get sick while away? *What if . . . ?*

Thinking of these “*what if’s*” burdens our minds; they can cause stress and our study can suffer. Our vacation may not be as enjoyable with constant worry.

Many times we may also think “*what if*” in the context of what could have been in the past. Perhaps when we come to the end of the day, or the end of the year, we think we did not get everything accomplished we wanted to. *What if* we had done things differently? How would the outcome have changed? Would we have accomplished more, if . . . ?

“*What if*” can be a cause of fear and worry. We may look at all the problems we are facing and we keep playing the “*what if’s*” in our mind, over and over again, thinking of different possible scenarios to manage the problems. *What if* we did it this way . . . or *what if* we did it that way?

David was worried and concerned about the anger of King Saul. It was irrational at times and David never knew when Saul would lose his self-control. “Then said David to Jonathan, Who shall tell me? or *what if* thy father answer thee roughly?” 1 Samuel 20:10. When the future is uncertain, as it was for David, are we tempted to think, *what if*? *What* will happen when, *if* I am unable to buy or sell? *What* will happen *if* my family and friends turn against me?

There are many who are questioning God. They either do not believe He exists, or they do not take religion seriously. They see no benefit in serving the Lord. There is nothing to gain. But, regardless of how they think or feel, God never

changes. “For *what if* some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?” Romans 3:3. God never changes, neither does His law and the penalty for lawlessness. True religion is not to be taken lightly or put into the closet and taken out only when needed.

Some may believe there is a God, but do not take prayer seriously. Prayer is for the simple people—not the educated or rich. They believe they have no need of God’s help. “What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? and *what* profit should we have, *if* we pray unto Him?” Job 21:15. David challenged people to “taste and see that the LORD is good.” Psalm 34:8. There is much to be gained if we take the time to pray. “Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power.” –*Gospel Workers*, p. 254

Also, sin is not to be taken lightly. “For thou saidst, What advantage will it be unto thee? and, *What* profit shall I have, *if* I be cleansed from my sin?” Job 35:3. Is there any benefit from being cleansed from sin? Much!! “Can we not understand that the most costly thing in the world is sin? It is at the expense of purity of conscience, at the cost of losing the favor of God and separating the soul from Him, and at last losing heaven.” –*Faith and Works*, p. 17

“If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, *what* advantageth it me, *if* the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.” 1 Corinthians 15:32. What is the point of living a righteous life if there is no resurrection? Let each live unto himself, satisfying all their sinful lusts to the fullest extent. Enjoy life to the fullest because there is no God, they say.

What if . . .

- There was no heaven to win?
- There was no hell to shun?
- There was no God?
- Our religion is not worth anything by the time we die?

Would you:

- change your lifestyle that you are living today? And if so, how?
- dress differently?
- eat differently?
- still attend church and pay your tithes?
- still help your neighbours?
- watch different TV shows or surf different websites on the Internet?
- stay with your spouse?
- change your job?

The list can be endless. There are many ways in which a worldly man’s lifestyle does not measure up to the Word of God. If you know what is written in the Bible about life-

style, but if there is no God, would you change the way you live, as there would be no accountability?

There are two opposite ways you can answer this question:

Many years ago, over 20 years at least, a man told me that if there was no God and no heaven, he would not change the way he lived in the least. The lifestyle outlined in the Bible is conducive to man's happiness. A healthier lifestyle is promoted by proper eating, dressing and proper rest. A happier state of mind exists as we help those who are in need of help. And, why waste your brain energy and fill it with nonsense from the media?

On the other hand, a young man asked me once, that, *what* would happen *if* you got to the end of your life and then found out there was no heaven and no God, then what a waste of time it was in your life to try to be vegetarian, keep the commandments, pay your tithes and participate in church duties, while denying the pleasures of the world?

Which category do you fit in? Many of us may say we would agree with the first man. However, consider seriously the direction in your life and your motivation for following the Lord and being a part of His church today. "Consider your ways." Haggai 1:5

Thankfully we have clear evidence of the existence of God, but realistically speaking, *would* your lifestyle change *if* He did not exist? If so, what is your motivation for following Him now? Is it because you *want* to, or is it because it is a way you *must* live in order to be in heaven one day but you are not very happy with it and wish there was another way?

Many followed Jesus only for the benefits. "Some have been zealous to attend all the meetings, not to glorify God, but for the 'loaves and fishes'" (*Early Writings*, p. 58); or for the notoriety of having some important offices and responsibilities in the church.

Ask yourself, What if:

- You had no offices in the local church?
- You had no offices in the Field, Union or General Conference level?
- They did not do things the way you wanted them to do in the church?
- God did not provide you with the job you wanted because of Sabbath?
- There are only a handful of members in your local church?
- There are no other youth, or children for our young people to socialize with?
- There is no potential spouse that can be seen at the moment in the church?
- Some one you cared about offended you, whether intentionally (fallen human nature) or unintentionally?
- Fallen human nature got a hold of some of the mem-

bers and they spread some false rumours about you?

Would you still be a part of God's church?

We are mingling with sinners in church—sinners in need of Christ, that Christ came to save—sinners who are striving for salvation and sometimes make momentary slip-ups. We are also mingling with the tares that the enemy has planted in the midst of the church.

There are many different instances in the religious life that one could ask "what if?"

What if God's plan for your life differs from your plan?

Many people have a plan for their life. They have dreams and goals and set out to pursue them; however, *what if* God has a different plan for your life than you intended? Some people want to tell the Lord what He (the Lord) must do for them for their salvation. They tell the Lord, they must have this kind of job. They tell the Lord, they must live in this type of house. They tell the Lord when it is time to be married. They tell the Lord what kind of offices they must have in the church if they are to remain in God's church.

"God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. Not Enoch, who was translated to heaven, not Elijah, who ascended in a chariot of fire, was greater or more honored than John the Baptist, who perished alone in the dungeon." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 224–225. After the mountain top experience on Mount Carmel, we see Elijah fleeing for his life and becoming weary of running, so "he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life." 1 Kings 19:4. Elijah's wish was not granted—he never faced death. And John the Baptist? Did he expect to die a martyr? It is likely he would have wished to be Jesus' right-hand-man. However, each was led in a different way—according to God's will.

We need to trust the leading of the Lord, knowing that He will not always give what we want in life, but we will receive exactly what we need for our salvation. Do not get dismayed if He leads you somewhere completely different than what you originally expected or wanted.

What if all of God's children were missionary minded?

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" Luke 15:4. The Lord has a mission for each person, and *what if* each faithfully did their duty? *What if* you only went out when you *felt* like going out to do missionary work? Would you go? "Go to work, whether you feel like it or not. Engage in personal effort to bring souls to Jesus and the knowledge of the truth. In such labor you will find both a stimulus and a tonic; it will both arouse and strengthen. By

exercise your spiritual powers will become more vigorous, so that you can with better success work out your own salvation.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 387. *What if* each person put their heart and soul into saving those around them? What a harvest of souls would be seen and how soon would Jesus come.

What if we obeyed God without question? We know that Abraham had no questions when he was told to go sacrifice his son. He got up and obeyed. On the other hand, Jonah asked, “what if” and ran away. Perhaps Solomon was a little overwhelmed with the prospect of the building of the temple and had questions, so David his father gave him this counsel. “And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.” 1 Chronicles 28:20. David said, “do it”. No questions asked. Do it. When God tells us to do something, do not question about who, how, when. Do not ask, “what if?” Just do it.

What if God showed mercy to poor sinners? “What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” Romans 9:22. This is what God did. We do not need to think of possible answers. He clearly, willing to show wrath against sinners, decided instead to show longsuffering to His vessels (you and I). I think He was hoping, that *what if* He showed kindness and came up with the plan of salvation, would there be anyone willing to accept Him into their lives? Would any be willing to worship Him, leaving the ranks of the evil one? He took a calculated risk, and yes, there will be a Great Multitude and 144,000. He took the punishment we deserve. What more could He do for us?

What if we are patient in tribulation? Is the Lord happy to see His children suffer?

“Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon My people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon My people: smite therefore upon thy thigh. Because it is a trial, and *what if* the sword condemn even the rod? it shall be no more, saith the Lord GOD.” Ezekiel 21:12–13

Suffering is for testing and trials. “For *what* glory is it, *if*, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but *if*, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” 1 Peter 2:20

The Lord is well pleased when His children pass the test. He desires to give them a 100% score on their tests, and this is only possible if the students put 100% of an effort into the test. 100% is the passing grade for the Lord’s tests. “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.” Psalm 116:15

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Matthew 16:26. To gain the world has always been the ambition of the wicked, from the time of Satan up until today. There is no good answer to this question as there is no profit.

Every day we make decisions—large and small—decisions about what to eat, what to wear, how to use our spare time, what to buy at the store, education, employment, and so on. Before we make any decision, whether large or small we must ask, what will it profit me only on this earth? How will it profit me as far as salvation is concerned? Will it lead me closer or further away from Christ? Is Jesus pleased with my decision?

Judah asked this question, “And Judah said unto his brethren, *What* profit is it *if* we slay our brother, and conceal his blood.” Genesis 37:26. Even though they sold him as a slave, thankfully they chose to consider the consequences of death and chose not to slay him. How much more they would have suffered with guilt, had Judah not stopped to consider, “What if?” We need to stop and think!! *What if?*

What if this was your last day on earth or what if Jesus would come this year? How would you live your life? When you woke up this morning, you had the same problems as yesterday, the same burdens and same needs, the same worries and fears as when you went to bed.

Although today may be just another day, *what* would you do *if* this was the last day of your life? How would you live? “All we have to do with is this one day. Today we must be faithful to our trust. Today we must love God with all the heart and our neighbor as ourselves. Today we must resist the temptations of the enemy, and through the grace of Christ gain the victory. Thus we shall watch and wait for Christ’s coming. Each day we should live as if we knew that this would be our last day on this earth. If we knew that Christ would come tomorrow, would we not crowd into today all the kind words, all the unselfish deeds, that we could? We should be patient and gentle, and intensely in earnest, doing all in our power to win souls to Christ.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 355

What if the impossible was possible? “And He said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.” Luke 18:27. And *what if* our faith was strong enough to move mountains (Matthew 17:20)? *What* a mighty work would be done through God’s children today, *if* . . .

What if your life could change? Many doubt that God can change their sinful life into a life of purity. They believe that God created the world in six days. They believe He is a Mighty God and is in control of the affairs of this world; however, they do not believe He can enable them to overcome every sin. There will be some sins, they believe, they will retain until the Lord comes, and they comfort themselves with the thought that they do not need to overcome

all. They can cease to struggle and strive against sinful tendencies. They will be sorely disappointed in the end because the promise is, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." Ezekiel 11:19. Today, you must claim this promise. A new heart, in connection with Christ can overcome every sin, today.

What if you could make a difference in someone's life?

What if you used the opportunities to witness for the Lord that He provides every day, rather than going through life with blinders on your eyes, fixed only on your problems and needs. "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." James 5:20. Are you willing to try? What if you could be surrounded by your friends, family, workmates, and neighbours in heaven? Would that not be wonderful?

What if you prayed without ceasing? (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Prayed for your enemies; spent all night in prayer. Prayed, truly believing that God does answer every prayer. Prayed as did Elijah when he prayed for rain.



The servant watched while Elijah prayed. Six times he returned from the watch, saying, There is nothing, no cloud, no sign of rain. But the prophet did not give up in discouragement. He kept reviewing his life, to see where he had failed to honor God, he confessed his sins, and thus continued to

afflict his soul before God, while watching for a token that his prayer was answered. As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came. The servant appeared, and said, 'Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand.'" -*The Review and Herald*, May 26, 1891. Who sinned? Elijah or the nation of Israel? What a mighty prayer warrior he was.

"Satan is ever ready to insinuate that prayer is a mere form, and avails us nothing. He cannot bear to have his powerful rival appealed to. At the sound of fervent prayer, the hosts of darkness tremble. Fearing that their captive may escape, they form a wall around him, that Heaven's light may not reach his soul. But if in his distress and helplessness the sinner looks to Jesus, pleading the merits of

His blood, our compassionate Redeemer listens to the earnest, persevering prayer of faith, and sends to his deliverance a re-enforcement of angels that excel in strength. And when these angels, all-powerful, clothed with the armory of Heaven, come to the help of the fainting, pursued soul, the angels of darkness fall back, well knowing that their battle is lost, and that one more soul is escaping from the power of their influence." -*The Signs of the Times*, November 18, 1886

What if everyone on earth kept all of God's commandments?

"Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel." -*The Great Controversy*, p. 438. What a wonderful idea; sadly though, this will not happen universally on this earth, but we certainly can individually do our part in our small corner of the earth to show how the keeping of all of the commandments brings us peace and happiness.

What if, when the Lord returns, He finds us ready?

What a wonderful day it will be. I long to see each of you readers (those I know and those I have never met yet) with me there one day and I know it is only possible through the merits of the blood of Christ.

Going back to our original question, *What if* there was no heaven? Would you still want to live a good, wholesome life, healthy, and in harmony with your friends and neighbours? If so, you are then prepared to live in heaven, because heaven does exist and will be available for those who see the Christian lifestyle as the greatest blessing God gave to mankind rather than a boot camp—a rigorous set of rules that must be followed by a commanding officer before the reward is given. May God help each of you readers to be faithful, allowing

God into your heart that you can serve Him with the correct motive. He gave His all for us. *What if* you gave your all in return? We are helpless without Him, but with Him . . . nothing is impossible. Amen.

All emphases in Bible verses mine.

Wendy Eaton





Control of the Tongue



Well known Christian author, John Trent, tells the following story. Mary had grown up knowing that she was different from the other kids, and she hated it. She was born with a cleft palate and had to bear the jokes and stares of cruel children who teased her non-stop about her misshaped lip, crooked nose, and garbled speech. With all the teasing, Mary grew up hating the fact that she was “different”. She was convinced that no one outside her family could ever love her. . . until she entered Mrs. Leonard’s class. Mrs. Leonard had a warm smile, a round face, and shiny brown hair. While everyone in her class liked her, Mary came to love Mrs. Leonard.

In the 1950’s, it was common for teachers to give their children an annual hearing test. However, in Mary’s case, in addition to her cleft palate, she was barely able to hear out of one ear. Determined not to let the other children have another “difference” to point out, she would cheat on the test each year. The “whisper test” was given by having a child walk to the classroom door, turn sideways, close one ear with a finger, and then repeat something which the teacher whispered. Mary turned her bad ear towards her teacher and pretended to cover her good ear. She knew that teachers would often say things like, “The sky is blue,” or “What colour are your shoes?” But not on that day. Surely, God put seven words in Mrs. Leonard’s mouth that changed Mary’s life forever. When the “whisper test” came, Mary heard the words: “I wish you were my little girl.”

This story certainly illustrates the potential of words, spoken in due season, to drastically alter the destiny of an individual’s life for the better. Through our words each one of us has the capacity to significantly affect the lives of others. How will we choose to use this powerful tool entrusted to us by God?

I am certain that at some point in each of our lives we have said something that we regret, and that we really

wish we could take back. It is the reality of life on this earth that we don’t always say the ideal things, and in many cases we say things which are downright hurtful and cause others to become offended. Often we don’t intend to hurt others with our words, but we still find that this does happen, and of course the human tendency to speak on impulse contributes to this. Sometimes our words leave permanent scars and our relationships are never the same afterwards.

So, how do we control the tongue, and how important are our words really? King David said, “I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.” Psalms 39:1. We see here that David is hoping not to sin with his tongue. It is clear that our words, and how we use our tongue is quite serious. Failing to control our tongue will ultimately cause us to transgress God’s law, and transgressing God’s law will disqualify us from heaven.

What does David mean when he specifically mentions that he will bridle his tongue, while the wicked is before him? Why is it specifically important to watch our words when we are in the presence of non-believers or the unrighteous? In the presence of the unrighteous, or non-believers who have an open mind to hearing about God, we must be very careful of our words and conduct, because we know that our words can either be their salvation or can turn them off of Christianity forever. For those non-believers who are openly opposed to God and anything relating to Him, we also must be careful because we know they are looking for any opportunity to misconstrue or misinterpret our words to serve their own purposes of painting us in an unfavourable light.

In relation to our conduct around other believers we know

that our words can either uplift and encourage or cause people to become discouraged or be given over to despair. As the saying goes “The Christian army is the only one with the tendency to shoot its wounded.” What does this mean?

Well, as Christians, often when we discover that a fellow believer is struggling with a certain sin we are somewhat shocked, and our first instinct is to judge them and speak negatively about them. The reality is that a person in that situation probably feels guilt and sadness about the sin they are struggling against. Therefore, when we come along in that moment and pronounce words of condemnation, when they already feel somewhat ostracized from their fellow brethren due to their own course of action, this has the tendency to compound the problem. Ultimately this can cause them to become estranged from the church and to engage fully in a lifestyle of sin.

However, if we follow the Biblical principle laid out by Christ of loving the sinner and hating the sin we will never make this mistake. We will consistently call sin by its right name and warn them of their danger; but, due to our love of the sinner it will be our utmost priority to speak words of hope and upliftment, while simultaneously warning them of the imminent danger of their course of action. The goal of our words will ultimately be to bring that person back into the fold and secure their salvation. Logically we must realize that speaking words of condemnation is a clear indicator that the person passing judgment has not made the salvation of the struggling soul their primary goal.

“If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.” James 1:26. Is it important to seek only to look outwardly religious? If we have to seek to only look outwardly religious this is a sure sign that our hearts and characters are not where they should be. If Christ is truly living in our hearts then our words and example will be the outflowing of all the love for Jesus and our fellowman that we have in our hearts.

If the tongue is unbridled, or uncontrolled, then it will be evident that the inner man has not yet been transformed by the grace of God. The words that we speak are one of the truest indicators of what is really in our heart, and the quality of our character. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Matthew 12:34. This is why our words are so important, because they cannot be disconnected from our thoughts, our motives, and the state of our heart in relation to God. Our words cannot be viewed in isolation, because our thoughts and the motives of our heart are the source of our words. No matter how hard an individual may try to keep up an appearance of Godliness or religion, sooner or later an individual will betray their true character through their words, because

no one has complete self-control.

The more sin someone has harboured in their heart the greater the chance this will come out in their words, because sin is associated with impulsivity, which will ultimately manifest itself in a lack of self-control in relation to our words. Therefore, a tendency to speak impulsive words usually has a direct correlation to an impulsive nature or character.

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Matthew 12:36–37. It reads, “every idle word” not “every evil word”. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that the goal of our words should always be to uplift and our words must have purpose. If our words are careless and frivolous and without purpose, but not directly evil, we will still be judged for them. Furthermore, we know that our words are copied verbatim in heaven, and unlike our prayers to which the Holy Spirit adds and improves, our words are recorded just as they are. “Closely connected with Christ’s warning in regard to the sin against the Holy Spirit is a warning against idle and evil words. The words are an indication of that which is in the heart. ‘Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.’” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 323

“If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” James 3:2. Who would have ever thought that words could be so important that if we offend not in word, we have attained perfection. How is this possible? It is possible because, if our words are perfect and do not offend but rather uplift, as previously mentioned, it is a clear indicator that our innermost thoughts and motivations have been fully submitted to God.

If we are able to control the tongue we are also able to bridle the whole body. In other words, if we can control such a troublesome member, the tongue, then this is a very clear indicator that our life, as a whole, has been submitted to Jesus.

Control of the tongue goes hand in hand with controlling our thoughts. Although our words influence others, our words also have an influence upon ourselves. When we make our best effort to speak positively, even if we do not feel all that positive, then our state of mind will start to reflect that and will begin to have a more positive outlook on life. Similarly, if we have negative thoughts that we actually express through words, these negative thoughts will become stronger and will begin to pervade every area of our being, ultimately drastically affecting our perception of our lives.

Also, very importantly, “The words are more than an indication of character; they have power to react on the char-

acter. Men are influenced by their own words. Often under a momentary impulse, prompted by Satan, they give utterance to jealousy or evil surmising, expressing that which they do not really believe; but the expression reacts on the thoughts. They are deceived by their words, and come to believe that true which was spoken at Satan's instigation. Having once expressed an opinion or decision, they are often too proud to retract it, and try to prove themselves in the right, until they come to believe that they are. It is dangerous to utter a word of doubt, dangerous to question and criticize divine light. The habit of careless and irreverent criticism reacts upon the character, in fostering irreverence and unbelief. Many a man indulging this habit has gone on unconscious of danger, until he was ready to criticize and reject the work of the Holy Spirit." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 323

This is excellent motivation to pray to Jesus every time we have a negative thought or feeling inside. Pray to Him that He takes it away and relieves us of that thought, and do our utmost through the help of Christ to prevent that thought from being expressed in our words. The longer we dwell on a thought the more likely it will be expressed as words, so we must pray that the Lord removes a negative thought immediately.

Psychologists Cliff Notarius of Catholic University and Howard Markman of the University of Denver studied newlyweds over the first decade of marriage; they found a very subtle but telling difference at the beginning of the relationships. Among couples who would ultimately stay together, 5 out of every 100 comments made about each other were putdowns. Among couples who would later split, 10 of every 100 comments were insults. That gap magnified over the following decade, until couples heading downhill were flinging five times as many cruel and invalidating comments at each other as happy couples. "Hostile



putdowns act as cancerous cells that, if unchecked, erode the relationship over time," says Notarius, who with Markman co-authored the new book *We Can Work It Out*. "In the end, relentless unremitting negativity takes control and the couple can't get through a week without major blowups." (*U.S. News and World Report*, 1994). This is significant evidence of the danger in expressing negative thoughts in words, because not only does it erode trust and negatively influence the thoughts of others, but also it consolidates the negative thought in our own mind.

"Cultivate the habit of speaking well of others. Dwell upon the good qualities of those with whom you associate, and see as little as possible of their errors and failings. When tempted to complain of what someone has said or done, praise something in that person's life or character. Cultivate thankfulness. Praise God for His wonderful love in giving Christ to die for us. It never pays to think of our grievances. God calls upon us to think of His mercy and His matchless love, that we may be inspired with praise." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 492

What kind of a world would we live in, if everyone followed that principle? The principle of resisting the urge to speak negatively of others, and every time that temptation arises speaking well of them. What kind of a church would we enjoy if all members of the church followed that principle?

Almost everyone has some redeeming qualities, and so even if we feel their negative attributes far outweigh their positive attributes, we should still focus on the small positives rather than the more pronounced negatives.

"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Revelation 14:4–5. We understand that all those who constitute the 144,000 will be faultless or perfect before God, and it is clear that a significant part of that perfection is the fact that they have no guile in their mouths. They have overcome all tendencies to speak words out of impulse, or to speak words that glorify themselves, or to speak words that are idle rather than words that uplift and encourage.

The character is the only thing we can take to heaven and given how closely correlated our words and characters are we must have absolutely no guile in our mouths to be deemed worthy of heaven.

"Among the members of many families there is practiced the habit of saying loose, careless things; and the habit of tantalizing, of speaking harsh words, becomes stronger and stronger as it is indulged, and thus many objectionable

words are spoken that are after Satan's order and not after the order of God. . . . Burning words of passion should never be spoken, for in the sight of God and holy angels they are as a species of swearing." —*The Adventist Home*, p. 439

Let us keep in mind the fact that passionate words are just like any other sin, the more we give in to the temptation to speak words impulsively, the stronger this sin becomes and the more difficult it becomes to resist the urge to speak. And as we speak more impulsively words that are not in accordance with God's will, it will directly influence our thoughts. Our ability to think high and holy thoughts will be compromised.

Often the words we speak and the meanings attached to them are in part socially and culturally constructed. Words and their meanings do change over time. Therefore, what God will hold us accountable for are not necessarily our exact words but our motivations and intentions for saying those words, and the state of our heart while saying those words. That is why it mentions in the above quote that to the heavenly beings our passionate words are viewed as a form of swearing. To humans swearing is inherently worse than merely speaking passionate words, but to God, words spoken in anger, rage, and passion are just as sinful as swearing, even if the swearing itself is omitted.

Finally, let us keep in mind that our thoughts lead to words; our words are instrumental in shaping our actions, our actions ultimately form our habits, our habits begin to define and shape our character, and our character will determine our eternal destiny. So, how important is it that we prevent our ungodly thoughts from ever being expressed as words, and instead give these thoughts straight to Jesus?

"And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned with Him in many words; but He answered him nothing." Luke 23:8–9. Why did Jesus choose to stay quiet in this scenario?

"The mission of Christ in this world was not to gratify idle curiosity. He came to heal the brokenhearted. Could He have spoken any word to heal the bruises of sin-sick souls, He would not have kept silent. But He had no words for those who would but trample the truth under their unholily feet.

"Christ might have spoken words to Herod that would have pierced the ears of the hardened king. He might have stricken him with fear and trembling by laying before him the full iniquity of his life, and the horror of his approaching doom. But Christ's silence was the severest

rebuke that He could have given. Herod had rejected the truth spoken to him by the greatest of the prophets, and no other message was he to receive. Not a word had the Majesty of heaven for him. That ear that had ever been open to



human woe, had no room for Herod's commands. Those eyes that had ever rested upon the penitent sinner in pitying, forgiving love had no look to bestow upon Herod. Those lips that had uttered the most impressive truth, that in tones of tenderest entreaty had pleaded with the most sinful and the most degraded, were closed to the haughty king who felt no need of a Saviour." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 730

The greatest prophet of all time had spoken directly to Herod, and since he had rejected this prophet, his window of grace had passed. Jesus recognized that it was curiosity rather than a genuine desire to know the truth that prompted Herod's desire to see a miracle. But he *did* see a miracle that day. Jesus did not sin with a word, a thought, or even a look. Jesus was able to show this incredible love in the face of intense hatred in this time of crisis. It is a miracle that only love existed in His heart. At the present time we must strive to ensure that our hearts are fully surrendered to Christ, which will ensure that at the future time of crisis we can claim this miracle also—that our words and actions will display only love. Only love will be present in our words because, with the help of Christ, that will be the most significant characteristic present in our heart. Absolutely no hate will be expressed in our words because all hate will have been eliminated and replaced with a pure Christ-like love.

Like Jesus we must have the wisdom to recognize when our words would be beneficial because the person is truly seeking for the truth, as opposed to when we would merely be throwing our pearls before the swine. Like Jesus we must realize that silence is sometimes golden, particularly when our words will be of no benefit or encouragement due to the hardness of the heart of the hearers.

May God help us to consistently use our words to be a shining light in a dark world, and realize that our words can be a powerful force in reaching souls with the love of Jesus. Amen.

Richard Eaton



Dangerous Friendships

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” 1 John 2:15. “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” James 4:4

The word “love” appears 36 times in 1 John. We are told that God is love. We are told to love God and to love the brethren. We are also told there is a love that God does not approve of.

To Love is to be fully committed to someone or something. You cannot truly love your wife and live with another woman. How can a man say he loves his wife with all his heart and yet give himself to another woman? True love in the scriptures is giving 100 percent allegiance. A person cannot have one foot in the world and the other foot in the church. The apostle Paul uses the example of an athlete—he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules (2 Timothy 2:5).

Paul’s victory in his spiritual life was dependent on his denial of the lusts and impulses of his body. He made a conscious decision to control his lusts and not allow them to control him (1 Corinthians 9:26–27). Loving the world is completely opposite to loving God—one cannot be fully committed to the world and to Christ at the same time.

John tells us that if we love the world we do not really love God. You may think you love the Lord. You may even feel like you love the Lord, but you are deceived.

In Greek, the word for world is *kosmos*. It sometimes refers to the material universe and other times to mankind that is not worshipping the Lord. When John bids us “Love not the world” he is not talking about the material earth, but of mankind that is opposed to the ways of God; people that Satan has convinced to live in rebellion against God. John knows how strong the lusts of the flesh are, and bids Christians to beware of them and to resist their seductive power.

The “world” that John tells us not to love has three characteristics: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. He uses them to describe this godless world in which we live. “Bewitching temptations to follow the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are to be met on every side. The exercise of firm principle, and strict control of the appetites and passions, in the name of Jesus the Conqueror, will alone carry us safely through life.” —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 166

1. The Lust of the Flesh: “It was no easier for Enoch to live a righteous life than it is for us at the present time. The world in his time was no more favorable to growth in grace and holiness than it is now. It was by prayer and communion with God that Enoch was enabled to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are living in the perils of the last days, and we must receive our strength from the same source. We must walk with God. A separation from the world is required of us; for we cannot remain free from its pollution unless we follow the example of faithful Enoch. But how many are slaves to the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” —*The Southern Watchman*, March 10, 1908

Our flesh refers to our physical appetites and needs. The word “lust” is used to describe a strong attempt to gratify these needs contrary to the will of God. “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16

2. The Lust of the Eyes: “If lust of flesh applies particular to sins arising from the body, lust of eyes may be understood to refer to mental pleasure stimulated through sight. Much of sinful pleasure of the world is experienced through the eyes.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 642. The eyes of a worldly person love to behold treasure and riches like gold, silver, houses, lands, and possessions. They never seems to be satisfied. All a covetous man has is little more satisfaction than just beholding with his eyes, yet he takes great sinful pleasure in this.

We need to guard our eyes. Feeding our eyes on sensual images will only fuel improper desires. Confirming the link between seeing and desiring, Jesus warned: “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Matthew 5:28–29. To resist temptation, we must act decisively and not feast our eyes on provocative images.

About Eve we read: “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.” Genesis 3:6

Concerning Achan: “When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they [are] hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.” Joshua 7:21

Eve, Achan, King David, and many others in the Scriptures show how “the lust of the eyes” is one of the ways to be tempted and to even fall. Consider the faithful man, Job, who said: “I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?” Job 31:1. Why not make a similar resolve?

May this be our daily prayer “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way.” Psalm 119:37

3. The Pride of Life: This includes vanity, boasting and display; it is presumptuous confidence in one’s wisdom, skills, and strengths. It exalts self-sufficiency. “Selfishness cannot exist in a heart where Christ dwells; if cherished, it will crowd out everything besides. It will lead you to follow inclination rather than duty, to make self the subject of thought, and to gratify and indulge yourself, instead of seeking to be a blessing to others. Your wants, your pleasures, will come before everything else.... True happiness is to be found, not in self-indulgence and self-pleasing, but in learning of Christ.... Those who trust to their own wisdom, and follow their own ways, go complaining at every step, because the burden which selfishness binds upon them is so heavy.” –*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 82

“Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” James 4:4. Thinking, looking, acting, dressing, talking, and responding like the world are not seen in the followers of Christ. “God will accept nothing less than unreserved surrender. Half-hearted, sinful Christians can never enter heaven.” –*Our Father Cares*, p. 235

DANGEROUS RELATIONSHIPS

The way to build a relationship with someone is to spend time with them. Talk to them, and listen to them. We then will discover what they love, hate, enjoy, etc. It is unwise to think that a true union with two people is possible while one remains in darkness and the other walks in the light. These two people are walking in opposite directions. They are subjects of two different kingdoms.

“Good and evil never harmonize. Between light and darkness there can be no compromise. Truth is light revealed; error is darkness. Light has no fellowship with darkness, righteousness no fellowship with unrighteousness.” –*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, p. 30

Believers and unbelievers act quite different when principle is concerned; they have different goals in life. Frequently, if not always, they will walk in different paths. And when the relationship is not well controlled with much care, it will not be unexpected to see that it leads us into outward sin. Perhaps it may not be seen presently because it first begins with a simple neglect of a duty. This first step saps the foundations of our religion. It will then, little by little, suppress our zeal for God and gently cool that fervency of spirit which was present in our first love. If they do not openly oppose anything we say or do, their very spirit will affect our spirit. Subtly, it can lead to the same lukewarmness and indifference toward God. It will weaken our soul, destroy the vigour of our spirit, and cause us to slow down our running pace in the race that is set before us.

The world begins to tempt the follower of Christ by first offering peace and friendship. “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” James 4:4. The world is corrupt and perverted, opposed to God. It is a system designed to separate us from God and rob us of the blessings He has for us.

The appeal of the world is the same today as it was at creation. Eve was exposed to the same three temptations; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Eve saw that the tree was “good for food” (the lust of the flesh); that the tree “was pleasant to the eyes” (the lust of the eyes); and that it was “a tree to be desired to make one wise” (the pride of life).

Jesus was confronted with the same series of temptations in the wilderness: When He was hungry, Satan came to Him, saying, “command that these stones be made bread.” Matthew 4:3. (lust of the flesh). Then the devil, “taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, . . . If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down.” Matthew 4:5-6. (pride of life). “Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.” Matthew 4:8. (Lust of the eyes).

WHY SHOULD WE NOT LOVE THE WORLD?

Since we brought nothing into the world, we can take nothing out. People who lust after riches fall into temptation. They fall into a snare with many senseless and harmful desires which plunge them into ruin. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. Christ says, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.” Luke 12:15

In the world, often, people focus on what another person has, rather than who that person is. They are often more

aware of an individual's possessions and less concerned about the individual's spiritual condition.



OR



Love for the world is opposite to loving God. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15. "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." Matthew 6:24. The reason that love for the world pushes out love for God is that all that is in the world, (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) is not of the Father but is of the world. Loving the world excludes loving God. One cannot love the world and at the same time love God.

The World with its lust will pass away. "We must dwell as pilgrims and

strangers here if we would gain 'a better country, that is, an heavenly.' The heritage that God has promised to His people is not in this world." *—Conflict and Courage*, p 55. Why would a believer be so blinded by the enemy's sophistries as to continue investing his life in it, when, "this world and all its lusts is passing away"? Are you willing to exchange the eternal reward for some foolish temporal gain? (Matthew 16:24–26). "Those who secure for their children worldly wealth and honor at the expense of their eternal interests, will find in the end that these advantages are a terrible loss." *—Ibid.*, p. 55. If you love the world you will perish with the world; but if you love God, you will do His will and live with Him forever (1 John 2:17). To what are you truly, fully committed; to Christ or to this world?

"THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS"

The Bible is clear that the world is controlled by Satan, according to God's permissive will. Paul calls Satan "the god of this world." 2 Corinthians 4:4. In Luke 4:6, the devil said to the Saviour, "All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." This was a lie because everything, in reality, belongs to God. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." 1 John 5:19. Satan's influence is seen all throughout society. His influence is seen in the business world, in entertainment, in industry, and government. If you follow the practices of the world, you will find yourself following the devil! Jesus should be the true desire of the Nations!

"Everywhere men are unsatisfied. They long for something to supply the need of the soul. . . . Every human re-

source and dependence will fail. The cisterns will be emptied, the pools become dry; but our Redeemer is an inexhaustible fountain. . . . He in whom Christ dwells has within himself the fountain of blessing,—'a well of water springing up into everlasting life. . . .' The need of the world, 'The Desire of all nations,' is Christ." *—The Desire of Ages*. p. 187

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36

If you are content to live in this world, then embrace it with joy while you can. One day it will be consumed and you will be consumed with it. Paul says, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." Philippians 3:7–8. Worldliness is anything that separates you from the love of the Lord. We are told to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, and strength. Worldliness keeps you from loving and doing the will of God; from living the Christian life to the fullest.

The choice you make today will decide your eternal destiny. If you choose the world, you will be separated from Christ. You cannot love both.

Connect with Christ and flee spiritual adultery. Have no friendship with the world, no matter how strong the temptation is. Jesus can deliver you. And if you have already partaken of the world, break the bond without delay. Your life is at stake—your eternal life or eternal death. Keep yourself pure in the love of Christ at all cost. There can be no profitable fellowship between the righteous and the unrighteous, as there can be no communion between light and darkness. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17

"Never should God's people venture upon forbidden ground." *—The Adventist Home*, p. 63

Let all those who want to live in favour with God and receive His blessing, beware how friendships and acquaintances are formed with ungodly men. Let no pleasure or gain come from such acquaintances. When faced with strong temptations, the clear command from God is to, pluck out the right eye (Matthew 5:29)—tear yourself away from the most pleasing acquaintance. Why? "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 3:20.

Victor Sumbusho,
DR Congo

HEALTH MATTERS:

Vegetable Oils, Part 2:

Monounsaturated And Saturated Oils



Last month we learned about vegetable oils, and how most of them are unhealthy, highly-manufactured food products. Despite the claims that polyunsaturated vegetable oils are healthier than saturated fats, we learned that they are unhealthy due to their instability at high temperatures, which take place not only during the manufacturing process, but while cooking with them. The toxic substances produced are damaging to our health.

Before we get into a discussion of saturated and monounsaturated vegetable oils in more detail, let us look at the structure of fats to better understand the differences between various fats and their impact on our health. Fat molecules are made up of fatty acids—long chains of molecules, made up of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. There are about 16 different types of fatty acids; however, each fatty acid is slightly different in structure, and each has many jobs in our body. The carbon atoms are joined together with either a single bond or a double bond. If two carbon atoms are linked together by single bonds (C-C), they have the maximum amount of hydrogen atoms attached to them. In other words, they are “saturated” with hydrogen atoms. Along the full chain of the fatty acid, the more single bonds between carbons, the more hydrogen atoms are attached, and the more saturated the fat becomes. In some fatty acids, a pair of hydrogen atoms in the middle of the chain is missing, creating a gap that leaves two carbon atoms connected by double bonds (C=C) instead of single bonds. Because the chain contains fewer hydrogen atoms, it is said to be “unsaturated.” A fatty acid with one double bond is called “monounsaturated” because it has one gap; the rest of the carbon bonds are single-bonded. Fatty acids having more than one gap are called “polyunsaturated”. This is what the difference is between saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. In foods of animal origin, a large proportion of fatty acids are saturated. In contrast, in foods of plant origin, a large proportion of the fatty acids are unsaturated. Here is a diagram of the chemical bonds:

Saturated Fat (i.e., saturated fatty acid)	Unsaturated Fat (i.e., unsaturated fatty acid)
$\begin{array}{cc} \text{H} & \text{H} \\ & \\ -\text{C} & - \text{C}- \\ & \\ \text{H} & \text{H} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{cc} \text{H} & \text{H} \\ & \\ -\text{C} & = \text{C}- \end{array}$
Carbon-Carbon Single Bond	Carbon-Carbon Double Bond

What are the implications of fats either being saturated or unsaturated? In saturated fats, when all the bonds between carbon atoms are single bonds, it creates chemical stability. These “non-reactive” fats were traditionally used for higher heat cooking. Unsaturated fats with missing hydrogen atoms create chemical instability. And, the more double bonds a fat contains, the more reactive it is to heat, light, and oxygen. If we look at a couple of examples, monounsaturated oleic acid (a type of fatty acid), contained in olive oil has only one double bond and is relatively stable, considered safe for medium-heat cooking. On the other hand, polyunsaturated linoleic acid—dominant in soybean and canola oil—has two double bonds, and is considered highly unstable, making the fat highly reactive to light, heat, and oxygen. As a result, these so-called polyunsaturated “good” fats (referred to this way by nutritionists and other health experts) should not be used in cooking. Because of their reactivity, at high heat, these fats generate unwanted free radicals and poisonous aldehydes, which cause cancer, raise blood pressure, contribute to heart disease, increase cholesterol (counteracting the claim that polyunsaturated oils lower cholesterol levels) and other health issues. These diseases occur because the body is depleted of healthy antioxi-

dants as they are used to rid the body of the free radicals produced by these oils. Therefore, it is not just a matter of choosing oils that are healthy, but also whether they stay healthy when used in cooking.

Now we can understand more clearly as to why vegetable oils are classified as either saturated, monounsaturated, or polyunsaturated oils, and what each implies when we use these oils in cooking. All vegetable oils are a mix of fatty acid types. When we classify an oil as either saturated, monounsaturated, or polyunsaturated, we classify it by the most predominant fatty acid it contains. While we think of olive oil as monounsaturated, it, in fact, contains monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and saturated fatty acids. Oleic acid, a monounsaturate, merely predominates. Every vegetable oil has about 120 calories and 13 g of fat per tablespoon. What really makes the oils different is their composition: Each one has a unique ratio of saturated fat to monounsaturated fat (MUFA) to polyunsaturated fat (PUFA). This ratio determines whether the oil is a solid or a liquid, how well it can withstand high temperatures, and what effects it will have on the human body. Fatty acid viscosity (thickness) and melting temperature increases with decreasing number of double bonds; therefore, monounsaturated fatty acids have a higher melting point than polyunsaturated fatty acids (more double bonds) and a lower melting point than saturated fatty acids (no double bonds). Because unsaturated fats they have a double bond somewhere in their chemical structure, it causes them to be bulkier when interacting with other unsaturated fat molecules. This results in these fats being fluid at room temperatures. Monounsaturated oils are liquid at room temperature; however, they become semisolid or solid when refrigerated. Saturated oils are often solid at room temperature.

The chart on the right indicates the percentage of each type of fatty acid in the most common vegetable oils. The type of fat in the highest percentage defines the oil as either saturated, monounsaturated or polyunsaturated:

Stability of oils during heating is tested in two ways. The first is the smoke point of the oil. This is the temperature at which the oil begins to break down and smoke. Once the smoke point is reached, the oil begins to burn, and you destroy essential nutrients. Overheating also produced harmful free radicals. The more refined an

oil is, the higher will be the smoke point. This is not always a good thing, as the more refined an oil is, the more processing has taken place to produce it. The second test is the oxidative stability, how resistant the oil is to reaction with oxygen. Some polyunsaturated oils have higher smoke points, but they oxidize much easier than the other oils. The conclusion would be to use more saturated and monounsaturated vegetable oils in cooking, which tend to be more stable when heated, and are less refined. Let us examine whether using these oils are healthy, or just less damaging than polyunsaturated oils, but still unhealthy.

MONOUNSATURATED OILS

This class of vegetable oils, also known as Omega-9 fatty acids, includes olive, peanut, avocado, and canola. As we learned last month, although canola is considered a monounsaturated oil, because of the need to process the canola plant so extensively to extract the oil from it, canola oil is considered unsafe to use.

Olive oil especially is well known for its heart healthy effects and is believed to be a key reason for the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet. It contains 74% monounsaturated fatty acids. It has fats that contain predominantly only one double carbon bond; therefore it can be used in cooking as it is fairly resistant to heat and oxidation. It has a lower smoke point than some other oils; but, cooking on the average home stove, roasting in the oven or even sautéing or pan frying over medium heat does not affect the quality of olive oil. Therefore olive oil is a healthier alternative.

Olive oil can also be used cold in salads, etc. Olive oil, especially cold-pressed olive oil is processed without using heat, making it healthier than oils manufactured in high heat conditions. It contains much more nutrients and an-

Vegetable Oils	% Poly-unsaturated Fatty Acids	% Mono-unsaturated Fatty Acids	% Total Unsaturated Fatty Acids	% Saturated Fatty Acids
Safflower Oil	75	12	86	9
Sunflower Oil	66	20	86	10
Corn Oil	59	24	83	13
Soybean Oil	58	23	81	14
Cottonseed Oil	52	18	70	26
Canola Oil	33	55	88	7
Olive Oil	8	74	82	13
Peanut Oil	32	46	78	17
Palm Oil	9	37	46	49
Coconut Oil	2	6	8	86
Palm Kernel Oil	2	11	13	81

tioxidants, and is less refined. Keep olive oil in a cool, dry, dark place, to prevent it from going rancid. The composition of avocado oil is similar to olive oil, it is high in vitamin E; however, it can be expensive. It can be used for many of the same purposes as olive oil. You can cook with it, or use it cold. Peanut oil can also be used in higher temperature cooking; however, it can sometimes be chemically extracted. Pick varieties labeled "roasted," "toasted," or "expeller-pressed" to avoid this.

Research shows that diets with healthy amounts of monounsaturated fats have a host of health benefits, including:

- Decreased risk for breast cancer.
- Raises HDL (good) and lowers overall levels of cholesterol.
- Lower risk for heart disease and stroke.
- Weight loss.
- Decreased blood pressure.
- Less severe pain and stiffness for sufferers of rheumatoid arthritis
- Reduced belly fat.
- Are a great source of Vitamin E

Monounsaturated oils are considered the most healthy oils to use in cooking because of their health benefits and lack of harmful effects on our bodies.

SATURATED OILS

The group of saturated vegetable oils include coconut, palm, and palm kernel oils. Much of the saturated fats in plant-based oils can increase the "bad" cholesterol, but on the other hand they also increase the amount of "good" cholesterol. However, when it comes to high heat cooking, saturated fat oils, especially coconut oil, is your best choice. Close to 90% of the fatty acids in it are saturated, which makes it very resistant to heat. They do not produce any free radicals, and do not oxidize to produce harmful by-products.

Coconut oil is semi-solid at room temperature and it can last for months and years without going rancid. Coconut oil also has powerful health benefits. Coconut oil is composed of a special kind of saturated fat called a medium-chain fatty acid (MCFAs). MCFAs are burned rapidly by the liver and used for energy instead of being stored as fat. There is increasing evidence that an MCFAs contained in coconut oil—lauric acid—can actually improve cholesterol levels and help kill bacteria and other pathogens. The fats in coconut oil can also boost metabolism slightly and increase feelings of fullness compared to other fats. It also makes a great natural moisturizer, and can be substituted for butter. Make sure to choose virgin coconut oil as it is organic, it tastes good and it has powerful health benefits.

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Palm oil has slightly less saturated fat than coconut oil. Red palm oil, the unrefined version also contains nutrients such as vitamin E, Coenzyme Q10 and the antioxidant beta-carotene. It also has a very long shelf life before it becomes rancid.

Dietary fat was never all good or all bad; and saturated fat is not now all good, after having formerly been all bad. It depends on the specifics, which in turn depend on the foods you choose. There is increasing evidence that not all saturated fats are equal in their health effects. Overall, saturated vegetable oils are much healthier than saturated fats found in animals. The saturated fats—notably palmitic and myristic acids, which are found in dairy, meat and many processed foods—can increase blood lipids, initiate plaque build-up, contribute to vascular disease and inflammation.

Overall, saturated vegetable oils are not considered as healthy as monounsaturated vegetable oils as they can raise, however they are healthier than polyunsaturated vegetable oils when used in proper amounts. The recommendation is to keep the use of saturated fats to 10% of the daily calories in one's diet. This equates to 1–2 Tablespoons per day.

CONCLUSION:

Since all vegetable oils and foods contain a mix of fatty acids, we are almost never making pure comparisons of one type of fat to another; and for this reason, we might expect to see some overlap in positive or negative health effects. For example, if we say that if olive oil, which is mostly monounsaturated fat, is good for our health, we have to acknowledge that olive oil also contains some saturated fat when we make that conclusion. In the world of fats, "all good" vs. "all bad" is never really the case. However, most experts will agree that cooking with olive oil is the best "compromise" available.

Choose wisely when you make all food selections—plant foods, and those which are closest to their natural state—and you will avoid a host of ailments arising from the wrong kinds of fat, to excesses of sugar, salt, starch and calories. By choosing wholesome foods, you construct a wholesome diet, as God intended, which will improve, not only your quality of life, but years of life. Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, walnuts, almonds, lentils, beans, seeds, olives, and avocados are all among the foods most decisively recommended for health promotion. Also, they all contain healthy fats that are not found in the more processed foods, including vegetable oils.





CHILDREN'S CORNER:

Growing like Yeast



"Annie, what are you doing?" asked Maxi as he walked by the kitchen. He happened to catch a glimpse of Annie putting some flour into a bowl. This caught his attention.

"I'm going to help Mother make some bread" explained Annie. Flour was all over her hands and face.

"All by yourself? Can I help?" Max also wanted to put his hands in the flour, it looked like so much fun.

"No, I can't do it by myself because I don't know how. Mother went to go get one more ingredient from the store, something called yeast. Sure, you can help, you can bring some oil and I will get the salt. Mother said she would show how to make bread with only four ingredients."

Mother was back from the store, and in her hands she had a small bag, "Hello children, I'm back, I see you have the ingredients ready, so let us begin. We will first need to wash our hands."

The children ran to wash their hands. Mother had also bought them some aprons, so each one of them put an apron on. This made them very excited. She then began placing some flour into the bowl; Max had the chance to add some salt and Annie added the dry yeast. Mother then mixed the dry ingredients and then made a hole in the middle of the flour where she placed some oil and gradually began adding warm water as she mixed all the ingredients together. Annie and Max also had a turn in mixing in the ingredients. They then kneaded the dough for a good couple of minutes until the dough was smooth and elastic.

"And now, we leave it to rise" said Mother as she put a little olive oil on the round dough and then wrapped the top of the bowl with plastic wrap. After about an hour, the dough had doubled in size.

"Wow, how did that happen, Mother?" asked Max as he looked at the large piece of dough.

"Yeast is what allows the dough to rise, it is important to make bread. Without yeast, bread would be flat, however, with yeast, bread is big and fluffy," Mother explained as she unwrapped the bowl and divided the dough into four parts. The children helped to put them in bread molds. Mother then put the bread into the oven. As they waited for the bread to be ready, they sat at the kitchen table with a cup of delicious pineapple tea. Mother brought the family Bible.

Jesus once compared the kingdom of God to yeast. Listen to this: "He told them still another parable: The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough." Matthew 13:33

"What does that mean, mother?" asked Annie as she watched the bread rise and begin to turn a golden brown.

"Well children, presently the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. It exists in the hearts of those who believe and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. When someone believes in Christ, their faith begins to grow slowly in that person's life. Each day greater changes are seen in that person's life. Look at our bread, for example; we only put a small amount of yeast, but it has



spread and has made this beautiful large bread. When we have Christ in our hearts we will grow spiritually, and even our outward appearance begins to change. It is impossible to hide our faith because like the yeast, we make visible something that began in our hearts.”

“I understand Mother,” smiled Max. Annie nodded in agreement.

“Oh look children, the bread looks ready,” Mother put her oven gloves on and made her way to the oven.

“Yay!” said the children in unison. They couldn’t wait to try the bread they had made.



Challenge Eight

Find the following words in the search word puzzle

YIGAORNZLFYEDSWHJBREADNRG
 CDRGHTVXDNMKINGDOMTYHDG
 HEARTFVFWCVTY DGAXZHIKYBN
 DFMLOASYEASTBDTYHSWOPLDS
 LEAVENOHEAVENRYFGSQEMVVY
 RISENTAWMNEVDRGE MATTHEW
 NTWQDCFRFYEVDGODEWTDWCT
 DSBGTSERMSALTRWSCOILEVFTQ
 ONKDOUGEDOUGHRRFTWVGWAH

LEAVEN	YEAST
KINGDOM	MATTHEW
DOUGH	OIL
HEAVEN	BREAD
RISE	GOD
SALT	HEART

Complete all 15
 Challenges

Don't miss Grandpa's
 next visit to Annie and
 Max's home!!

Email your challenges here:
veronicanoemigarcia@gmail.com



“God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and learn of Him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their imperfections, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image.

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.’ 2 Corinthians 4:7, R. V. This is why the preaching of the gospel was committed to erring men rather than to the angels. It is manifest that the power which works through the weakness of humanity is the power of God; and thus we are encouraged to believe that the power which can help others as weak as ourselves can help us. And those who are themselves ‘compassed with infirmity’ should be able to ‘have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.’ Hebrews 5:2. Having been in peril themselves, they are acquainted with the dangers and difficulties of the way, and for this reason are called to reach out for others in like peril. There are souls perplexed with doubt, burdened with infirmities, weak in faith, and unable to grasp the Unseen; but a friend whom they can see, coming to them in Christ’s stead, can be a connecting link to fasten their trembling faith upon Christ.

“We are to be laborers together with the heavenly angels in presenting Jesus to the world. With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our co-operation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in wholehearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God’s love.” – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 294, 297



Philippines



Burundi



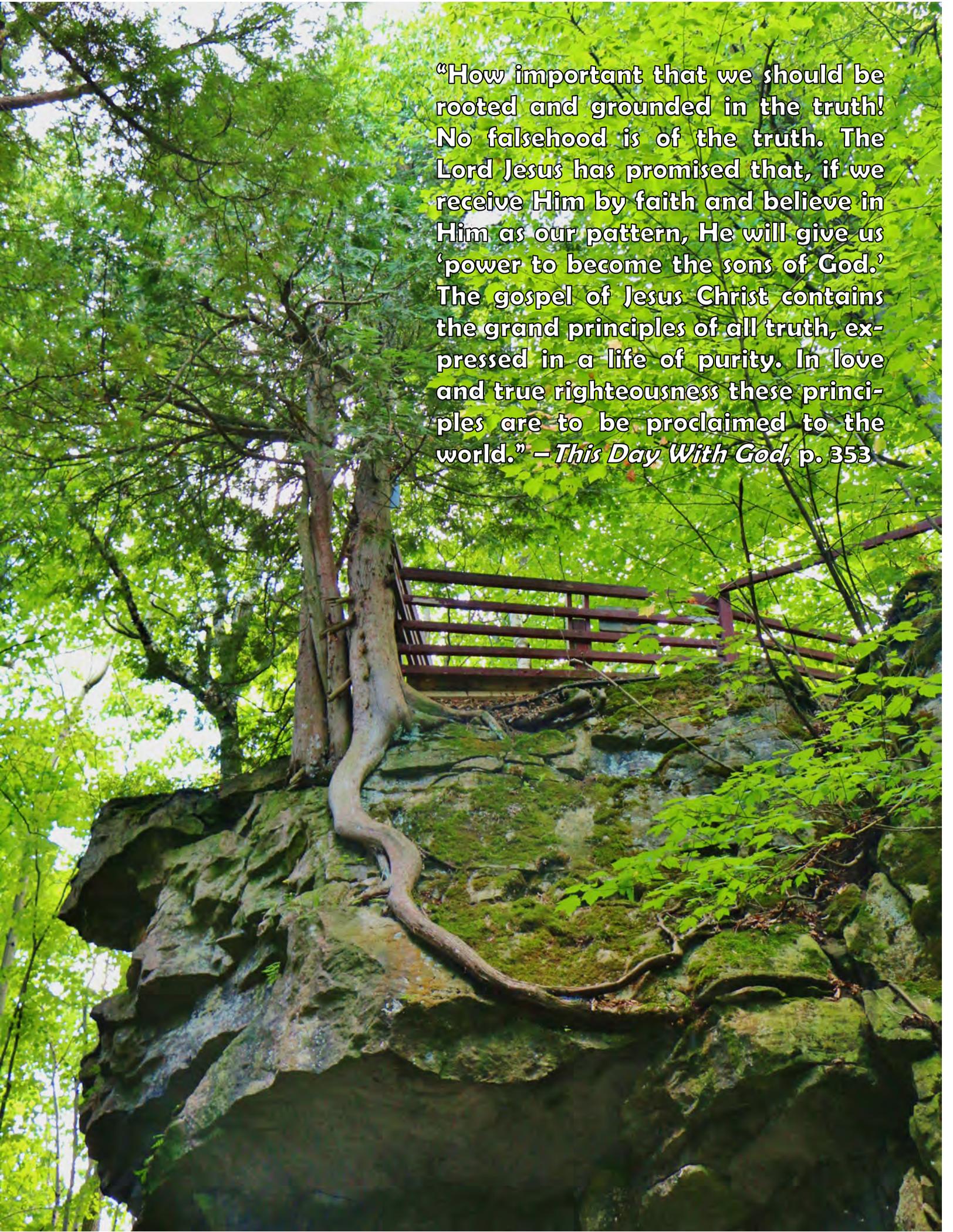
This camp meeting was from August 13–20, 2017 in the Burundi Union Province of Bubanza in the southwest field



Ghana



147 people attended the week long conference in Ghana in August 2017

A photograph of a large tree with thick, gnarled roots growing on a mossy rock face. The tree's trunk is on the left, and its roots spread across the rock. In the background, a wooden railing is visible, suggesting a viewing platform or walkway. The scene is surrounded by lush green foliage and trees, creating a dense forest atmosphere.

“How important that we should be rooted and grounded in the truth! No falsehood is of the truth. The Lord Jesus has promised that, if we receive Him by faith and believe in Him as our pattern, He will give us ‘power to become the sons of God.’ The gospel of Jesus Christ contains the grand principles of all truth, expressed in a life of purity. In love and true righteousness these principles are to be proclaimed to the world.” – *This Day With God*, p. 353