



The Reformation
Messenger
VOLUME 26, NUMBER 7, July 2019



Thanks for Being Thankful
Page 7

Out of Your Mind
Page 10

What do People Find in You?

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.

In This Issue:

3 Be Still

4 To Which Kingdom do We Belong?

7 Thanks for Being Thankful

10 Out of Your Mind

14 What Do People Find in You?

18 Health Matters: Food Additives:

Preservatives and Others

22 Children's Corner: The Importance

Of Obedience in Small Duties

24 Australian Field Youth Convention

26 Resurrection Gives us Hope and

Reason to Live!

PHOTO CREDITS

Front Cover: Helen Marttinen, Canada

Back Cover: Helen Marttinen, USA

Inside front cover: Helen Marttinen, Belize

The Reformation Messenger is published monthly. It is an Official Publication of the International Missionary Society the Seventh-Day Adventist Church Reform Movement, Canadian Field. Subscriptions can be paid online on the website or by mail.

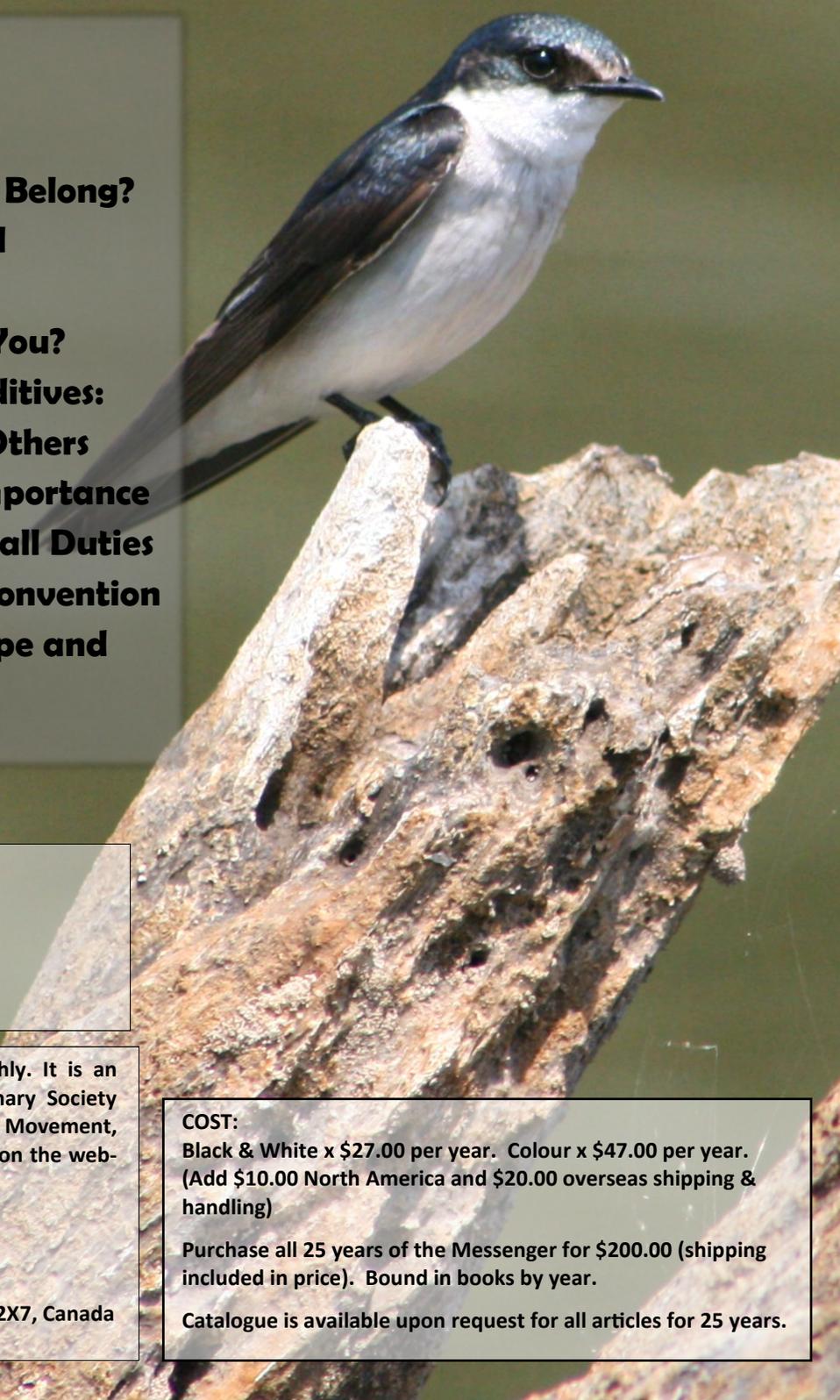
- Telephone: 905-876-2518
- E-mail: ismessenger@yahoo.com
- Internet: www.ismessenger.org
- Mail: RR #3, 7899 15 Side Road, Milton, ON L9T 2X7, Canada

COST:

Black & White x \$27.00 per year. Colour x \$47.00 per year.
(Add \$10.00 North America and \$20.00 overseas shipping & handling)

Purchase all 25 years of the Messenger for \$200.00 (shipping included in price). Bound in books by year.

Catalogue is available upon request for all articles for 25 years.





“Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD.” Exodus 14:13

“Moses was greatly troubled that his people should manifest so little faith in God, notwithstanding they had repeatedly witnessed the manifestation of His power in their behalf. How could they charge upon him the dangers and difficulties of their situation, when he had followed the express command of God? True, there was no possibility of deliverance unless God Himself should interpose for their release; but having been brought into this position in obedience to the divine direction, Moses felt no fear of the consequences. His calm and assuring reply to the people was, ‘Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.’” –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 284

“Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10

“An intensity such as never before was seen is taking possession of the world. In amusement, in moneymaking, in the contest for power, in the very struggle for existence, there is a terrible force that engrosses body and mind and soul. In the midst of this maddening rush, God is speaking.

He bids us come apart and commune with Him. ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’ Psalm 46:10.” –*Education*, p. 260

“If we would bear in mind the momentous events which are soon to take place, we would not be so weak in character. We would feel that we were living in the presence of God, and awed and amazed we should heed the injunction, ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’” –*Reflecting Christ*, p. 318

“In all who are under the training of God is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’ Psalm 46:10. Here alone can true rest be found. And this is the effectual preparation for all who labor for God. Amid the hurrying throng, and the strain of life’s intense activities, the soul that is thus refreshed will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. The life will breathe out fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men’s hearts.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 363

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.” Psalm 27:14

“Let us each wait on the Lord, and He will teach us how to labor. He will reveal to us the work that we are best adapted to perform.” –*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 490

“The strength of every soul is in God and not in man. Quietness and confidence is to be the strength of all who give their hearts to God. Christ has not a casual interest in us but an interest stronger than a mother for her child. . . . Our Saviour has purchased us by human suffering and sorrow, by insult, reproach, abuse, mockery, rejection and death. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. He will make you secure under His protection. . . . Our weakness in human nature will not bar our access to the heavenly Father, for He [Christ] died to make intercession for us.” –*Our Father Cares*, p. 22

“‘Be still and know that I am God.’ When every other voice is hushed, when every earthly interest is turned aside, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. Here rest is found in Him. The peace, the joy, the life of the soul, is God.” –*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 440

Ellen G. White

To Which Kingdom Do We Belong?

There are two kingdoms, Christ's kingdom and Satan's kingdom, and they both want to have us in their kingdom. Therefore, there is a terrible war raging in our world today between Christ and Satan—the two greatest powers in the universe. The battleground is our hearts; and we will decide which side will win us.

“The True Witness says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.’ Revelation 3:20. Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth.” — *The Desire of Ages*, p. 490

A sleeping Christian is not a reformer, and a lukewarm Christian is not a reformer; they are not winners in this war. Millions of professed Christians who claim to be soldiers of Christ's army are falling into the hands of the enemy. They are prisoners caught by the enemy, and taken into captivity, into darkness, and confusion of mind, into false religion, into a lukewarm condition, into self-righteousness, into love of the world. They are in danger of losing their eternal life. This war is fought in every human being, brother fights against brother, and this is what makes this war confusing; we do not always know who is our friend or who is our enemy, whom can we trust, or who is out to deceive us. Many are confused and doubting which side is the Lord's side, who belongs to the kingdom of God, and who belongs to the enemy. Also, there is confusion and doubts as to which are the laws of the kingdom of God and which are the false laws and doc-



trines of the enemy. People argue over these points, and almost four thousand Christian churches have different doctrines, so they cannot unite; they all believe that they are the only true church of God. When the principles of heaven are mixed together with the principles of the world, this makes the church Babylon. There could possibly be some members in the church of God also who are in danger of not being found faithful in every point when their names comes up in review at the judgment bar of God.

“God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. The light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold. God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God so that when the testing time shall come and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.” —

Sister White writes in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 251, “The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place.” This was written in the year 1903, and eleven years later the Reformation Movement started, which continues still today. At the same time the Seventh-Day Adventist Church fell into greater apostasy, forcing members of the church to join the army to fight against the enemy, when Jesus had said, “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

We are winning if we obey Jesus, and love our enemies. When Jesus took on human form and came to this world to invite us into His kingdom, and presented the principles of His kingdom to His own church, most of the members of the church rejected His invitation and united with Satan, and joined his kingdom. Satan seemed to be winning the war. Weapons that Jesus used are the same ones that we are using as we fight against Satan, which are “It is written.” Matthew 4:4. Bible knowledge makes us victorious in this terrible war. The victory which we gain is different from the worldly victory. The victory is when you answer kindly to angry words, the victory is when you suffer quietly, without murmuring or complaining; a humble quiet spirit is the result of many victories, and patience is added to your character. In the end, we become completely different than the people of the world.

In the time of persecution a soldier was taking a Christian to prison and to death. Being in the wintertime they crossed a lake covered with ice. Suddenly the soldier fell through the ice and was drowning. The Christian now could thank God that he was saved from his enemy; but no, he turned back to save the soldier from the icy water. He practiced a principle that the soldier had never known.

In the kingdom of God there is no principle of preference or supremacy. “But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” Matthew 20:26–27

Serving others is the greatest characteristic in the kingdom of God, to bring happiness to others; selfishness is completely absent from Christ’s kingdom.

If we want to overcome Satan’s kingdom and be part of Christ’s kingdom, we must also overcome our appetite. “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Romans 14:17. In the world when there is a feast or a party, the eating and the drinking are the highlights, but in God’s

kingdom it is joy in the Holy Ghost.

In the time of the First and Second World Wars some of our members were sentenced to prison for refusing to take a gun and join the army. When they finally came out of prison they said that it was the happiest time in their lives, to spend time among the criminals. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, and He gives us happiness in any condition, even in sickness and death.



“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26

Jesus stood before Pilate and the angry Jews without speaking one word in His defense. He had no lawyer to defend Him. “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence.” John 18:36

Our kingdom is not of this world either. Paul writes, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12. This verse is one that we need to remember always. Jesus came to this world to teach us the principles of His kingdom. Instead of fighting and defending ourselves, He said, “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 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: That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:39–45. The principles of the kingdom of heaven are completely different than the principles of this world.

Often it seems that the kingdom of Satan is winning when we see over 50 million martyrs in the Middle Ages who lost their lives for being members in Christ’s kingdom. But yet, the kingdom of Christ is winning. History tells us when one Christian suffered a martyr’s death, smiling and praising God, 20 took his place, and were converted into the kingdom of Christ.

It is still the kingdom of God that rules over all in this world. “The LORD hath prepared His throne in heavens,



And His kingdom ruleth over all.” Psalm 103:19

Without His permission, nothing can be done. “And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art Thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest Thou not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given Thee from above: therefore He that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin.” John 19:9–11

Job had a terrible misfortune, but it happened because it was allowed from above.

Sister White was in a boat during a terrible storm, and everyone was afraid that the ship would perish and they all would die. But right then Sister White had a vision, that rather every drop in the ocean would be dried up that she would not die, because her work was not finished yet.

The Jews wanted a Messiah who would drive out the Romans from their country, but Jesus did nothing like it, because He knew that His Father had allowed it, and He would not fight against His Father. The Seventh-day Adventists tried to destroy the little Reform flock by

sending letters to the government, giving their names and addresses to the authorities—the ones whom they had disfellowshipped, because they did not want to join the army and fight against the enemy. But the Reformation did not die; it is living still today and going forward. In the year 1914, what happened to the church of God that year? Was it a victory or a defeat? It was both. It was victory to the faithful remnant, but a defeat to the fearful, unfaithful members.

The war continues still today, and our battle is fierce. On the right and on the left many are fallen and lost. But the faithful ones are becoming more faithful; the 144,000 will be saved. God has complete control of all the affairs of men in this world. The keys of the kingdom of God are still in the hands of the faithful, humble members of His kingdom, who say, “My kingdom is not of this world.” We are the ambassadors of the kingdom of God, and its principles and laws we are to show to the people of the world, just as Jesus did. We are to win souls from the army of Satan and bring them into the army of Christ. Then the prayer of Jesus will be fulfilled, which was, “Thy kingdom come.” And it will come. Amen.

Timo Martin



Thanks For Being Thankful



One day a father and his son took a trip to the city and visited a wealthy friend and his family. The father was a bit worried since they lived on a farm in the countryside and came from a simple family. On their return, the father asked his son, “How was the trip?” His son answered, “It was great dad. I learned a lot from this trip!” The man was surprised as his boy continued. “They have one dog, but we have four. They have to buy their food while we grow ours. They have walls around their property to protect them; we have friends to protect us. They have a pool that reaches to the middle of the garden, but we have a creek that has no end. They have imported lanterns into their garden; we have stars at night. Their patio reaches to the front yard and we have the whole horizon. They have a small piece of land to live on; we have fields that go beyond our sight.” The boy’s father was speechless, then his son added, “Thanks dad for showing me how rich we are.”

Maybe this story made you smile a little, but there is more to it than just a light-hearted observation of a child’s perspective on life. There is a powerful lesson to be learned here. God urges us to “Give thanks” sixty-two times in the Bible. Ephesians 5 reminds us: “*See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. . . . Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (v. 15, 20). He knows that being thankful in all circumstances has a powerful impact on every area of our Christian life. Here are some emotional, physical, and spiritual benefits of gratitude:

1. Gratitude is an essential ingredient for joy. There is no way to “rejoice evermore” (1 Thessalonians 5:16) without giving thanks in everything (v. 18). That is why ungrateful people are so grumpy. Joy is an inner sense

of contentment, which flows from a deep assurance that all God’s purposes are good and He is in complete control of every situation. Dr. Brené Brown, a research professor at the University of Houston, discovered that all the people she interviewed who had described themselves as joyful, also actively practiced gratitude. The following quote affirms her work, “It’s not joy that makes us grateful, it’s gratitude that makes us joyful.” Ellen White also states, “If we would give more expression to our faith, rejoice more in the blessings that we know we have,—the great mercy and love of God,—we should have more faith and greater joy. No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a well-spring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of God.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253

2. Gratitude can improve your sleep. Gratitude activates the parasympathetic branch of your nervous system, also called the relaxation response, while negative emotions activate the sympathetic branch. Considering that, it is no surprise that gratitude has been shown to reduce the time required to fall asleep, increase sleep quality and sleep duration. At the end of every day there is nothing better you can do than to thank God for His blessings and His presence through every hour of the day. To recognize the ways He has led



you, offered protection over your family, and provided for your needs. Often we forget to give Him thanks for the constant way He is at work in our lives. “I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.” Psalm 4:8

Jacy stared at the night-light. It was too bright. She couldn't sleep. She pulled her blanket over her eyes. Now it was too dark! She couldn't sleep. Jacy grabbed her teddy bear. It had a little bell inside that made noise. Jacy shook the bear. Ting, ting, ting went the bell. That didn't help her sleep either. She was so bored! There was no one to talk to! And it was too quiet and too dark. Jacy started to cry. She would never fall asleep! Just then her door opened softly. “Jacy?” It was Daddy! He came and sat by her on the bed. “What's the matter?” Daddy asked. “It's too quiet! I can't sleep. My brain just keeps thinking of things!” Jacy wiped the tears off her cheeks. Daddy rubbed her back. “Sometimes when I can't sleep, I sing my favorite song. And then I count my blessings.” Daddy started singing, “Count your blessings, name them one by one. Count your blessings, see what God hath done.” Jacy hummed along. She liked this song too. “What are some of your blessings?” Daddy asked. “Um, my teddy bear,” said Jacy. She waved the bear to make the bell jingle. “That's a good blessing,” said Daddy. “What else?” “Daddy!” said Jacy. “Daddy is a blessing.” That made Daddy smile. “And Mommy,” said Jacy. “And baby Darel. He's kind of a blessing.” Daddy laughed. “How about your warm bed and your night-light?” Jacy nodded. She was starting to feel sleepy. Daddy pulled the blanket up to Jacy's chin. “You are a blessing too, Jacy. I love you.” He gave her a kiss and closed the door behind him. Jacy hummed the song again. “Count your blessings, count your blessings. . .” And soon she was fast asleep.

3. Gratitude increases your resilience. Resilience is your ability to bounce back and recover more quickly from setbacks or stressful situations. Grateful people are able to see the bigger picture and remember the positive in their lives. As a result, they are less likely to let bad events pull them into a downward spiral and more likely to grow in times of stress. Last year I struggled with the loss of my father who passed away due to brain cancer. During the past months of grief, I still tried to thank God for all the wonderful moments I had lived with my father and all the lessons I had learned from him. Being thankful helped me avoid becoming trapped in depression, and to instead focus on God and all His blessings. There is one person in the Scriptures in

particular that comes to mind when I think of resilience and gratitude. Also his well-known teaching about overcoming adversity. It is Paul. He talks about rejoicing during hardship in Romans 5, because “tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope.” And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us” (v. 3-5). Many of his letters to the early church begin by expressing thanks. “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” Colossians 3:17

4. Gratitude reduces social comparison. Sometime last week I logged on to Instagram. I saw a picture that one of my coworkers had posted of his vacation on the Maldives. Within minutes I felt envious and secretly wished I could go there too. But right away I started to thank God for all the other places I had already travelled to, and the wonderful experiences I had made there. Social comparison is a game in which there is no endpoint. It draws you to not appreciate what you have been given, but to nurture an endless desire to have what others have. The article “Teen Mental Health and Social Comparison” published on the website of the Newport Academy states that social comparison “can be detrimental to self-esteem, self-image, and well-being. In addition, constant evaluation of oneself versus others can create a judgmental, competitive outlook. Hence, one study found that people who make frequent social comparisons are more likely to experience envy, guilt, regret, and defensiveness.” The Bible calls this act of comparison “coveting”: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.” Exodus 20:17. If you commit yourself to being deeply grateful for what God has done in your life, and remind yourself of it daily, you will be far less vulnerable to comparison and envy. If someone or something triggers that ugly feeling of negative comparison, stop and remind yourself of God's blessings.

5. Gratitude focuses on God. Thanking God focuses our attention on Him rather than our circum-



stances. The key to a grateful heart begins with understanding His character. He knows exactly what you are going through, loves you unconditionally, and understands you perfectly. When you thank Him in tough times, He gets bigger, and the circumstances become smaller. It reminds you that you are not in control, but that you serve a Mighty God who is. It keeps you in a place of humility and dependency on Him, as you recognize how much you need Him. "The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him." Psalms 28:7

Some time ago I was touched by the story of Borghild Dahl. She was born in 1890 and from her early years suffered severely impaired vision. Against the advice of educators, who felt her handicap was too great, she attended college. She eventually became the principal of eight schools. She wrote the following in one of the seventeen books she authored: "I had only one eye, and it was so covered with dense scars that I had to do all my seeing through one small opening in the left of the eye. I could see a book only by holding it up close to my face and by straining my one eye as hard as I could to the left." When she was over fifty years old a medical procedure finally restored much of the sight she had been without for so long. A new and exciting world opened up before her. She took great pleasure in small things, such as watching a bird in flight, noticing

the light reflected in the bubbles of her dishwater, or observing the phases of the moon each night. She closed one of her books with these words: "Dear . . . Father in heaven, I thank Thee. I thank Thee." Borghild Dahl, both before and after her sight was restored, was filled with gratitude for her blessings.

"Forgetting our own difficulties and troubles, let us praise God for an opportunity to live for the glory of His name. Let the fresh blessings of each new day awaken praise in our hearts for these tokens of His loving care. When you open your eyes in the morning, thank God that He has kept you through the night. Thank Him for His peace in your heart. Morning, noon, and night, let gratitude as a sweet perfume ascend to heaven." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253

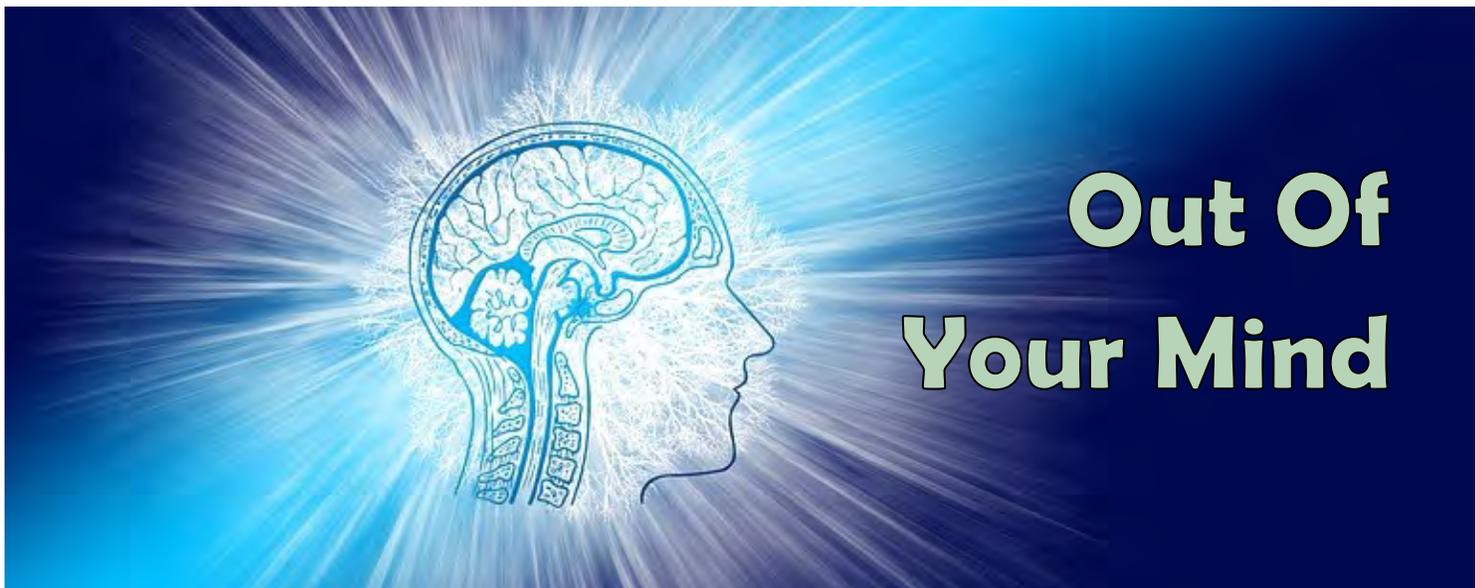
Manuela Di Franca, Germany
Assistant of the Education Department
of the General Conference



"The Law an Expression of God's Idea.--The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.

"We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.

"The law is an expression of God's idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin." — *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1085



Out Of Your Mind

We have an expression in English, “Are you out of your mind?”

When someone has done something ridiculously foolish, you ask them in jest, “Are you out of your mind?”

When someone has done something really annoying that you think is ill-advised and uncalled for, you ask them in anger or in a derogatory manner, “Are you out of your mind?”

What does this expression mean? If you say that someone is out of their mind, you mean that they are mad or very foolish. They have lost control of their mental faculties and reasoning ability to act in what we deem normal behaviour.

So, what is normal behaviour? How can this be described? It all depends on what perspective you are looking at it from. Normal behaviour for a worldly person is contrary to what a true Christian would view as normal behaviour.

From a worldly perspective, the extreme normal behaviour is living and doing anything and everything for self. Doing what makes you happy. Not worrying so much about others around you, unless it is to your advantage and happiness. You are in a marriage so that your spouse can make *you* happy. You try to find a job that makes you a lot of money so that you can heap to *yourselves* material wealth.

From a Christian perspective, normal behaviour is the opposite. It is living for others. Denying oneself for the good of others, and serving God above serving self, regardless of the self-denial involved.

Both sides claim that their normal behavior results in the ultimate happiness. Both sides see the other side as unnatural behaviour—they are out of their mind.

So, who is in their right mind? Who is out of their mind? The Apostle Paul wrote, “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath

chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” 1 Corinthians 1:27. Clearly, each opposing side looks at the other side as foolish.

You could argue that we all are essentially out of our own minds because we are either servants of God, or slaves of Satan. Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24

When we read this text, there are two masters mentioned. What if we do not serve either? Is there a third or fourth option? Or do we simply not serve anyone, but only ourselves? The truth is that there are only two options and we are serving one or the other. There is no middle ground.

“It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324

This quote clearly states, you are under the control of one or the other. There are two masters vying to control your mind, and you decide who will be the controlling influence in your life. “The spirits of darkness will battle for the soul once under their dominion, but angels of God will contend for that soul with prevailing power.” —*Ibid.*, p. 259

You can ask any Christian and they will say that they have chosen to follow Jesus. However, if you look at the Christian world, there are hundreds of Christian churches, all claiming to serve Jesus, but in a slightly different manner. There are many different roads to heaven, they argue. There are a variety of standards to suit any lifestyle. However, there is only one lifestyle that Jesus approves of. He

said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." John 14:6. There is only one way that leads to Paradise. Many call themselves Christian, thinking they are in their right mind when the church they adhere to is teaching and preaching error. They are deceiving themselves. They may not be in their right mind and they do not realize it.

We all know this—so now, what about in God's church? We have been blessed with a great knowledge of the Bible—its doctrines, prophecies, and requirements for salvation. Will this save us? Does this mean that we are guaranteed a place in heaven? Knowledge alone will not save us. How seriously do you live up to all the standards of the church, including Sabbath-keeping, Health and Dress reform? The Apostle Paul wrote, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Corinthians 2:16

Contemplate on this thought for a minute—"the mind of Christ." We have the mind of Christ? Who is Christ? Is He not sitting on a throne in heaven beside His Father? Is He not King of Kings, and Lord of Lords? Our Saviour, Mediator, Redeemer? And yet we sinners are to "have the mind of Christ."

"Christ must be all in all to us, He must dwell in the heart, His life must circulate through us as the blood circulates through the veins." *—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, p. 1144

Are we out of our mind? Out of our own mind? Yes, in a real sense, but not out of our mind in the way that the world views Christianity. We are told to have the mind of Christ. I now ask, what does your mind do? What is its purpose? It rules your entire life—body, soul and spirit. "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23

The world is ruled by the prince of darkness and he controls their minds. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7. The carnal mind is wholly incapable of submitting to the law of God. Only by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit is obedience made possible. The mind must be changed in order for the life to be changed. We must move from the worldly mind into the mind of Christ.

The demoniacs in the time of Christ were very obviously out of their mind, and only Jesus could facilitate the change that was made in their minds. (Matthew 8:28–34). Jesus only can facilitate any change in our lives if we desire a change.

"When Christ revealed to Peter the time of trial and suffering that was just before Him, and Peter replied, 'Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee' (Matthew

16:22), the Saviour commanded, 'Get thee behind Me, Satan' (Matthew 16:23). Satan was speaking through Peter, making him act the part of the tempter. Satan's presence was unsuspected by Peter, but Christ could detect the presence of the deceiver, and in His rebuke to Peter He addressed the real foe." *—Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 353. Did Peter have the mind of Christ on this occasion? No, he did not. Jesus simply could have responded, "Peter, are you out of your mind?" But He said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan." Peter acted out of his mind, not realizing what he was saying. Who was influencing his words?

If you have the mind of Christ, you would do what Jesus does, every moment of your life. You would value the time given you. You would speak what Christ speaks, think as He thinks (no anger or resentment or foolish thoughts). You would act as He does, eat what He does, and dress as He would, and so on.

Now, I want to tie in the concept of hypnosis here. Many of us are familiar with the term "hypnotism" and are aware that its use originates from the powers of darkness. In the world they try to show the positive side of what hypnotism really can accomplish.

The basic definition of hypnotism is one mind controlling another mind. When you are hypnotized you are truly out of your mind and are controlled by someone else (not Christ). You become vulnerable to the suggestions made by the hypnotist. Sometimes it has been used for medicine and psychology for the purposes of recovering repressed memories, for modifying or eliminating undesirable behaviour (for example, treating certain chronic disorders, such as anxiety). The person in these cases willingly permit themselves to be hypnotized. "Hypnotic treatments are among a number of nonbiomedically-focused treatments that have been shown to result in significant reductions in pain and improvement in overall quality of life in persons with acute and chronic pain." <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198570097.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780198570097-e-020#oxfordhb-9780198570097-appendix-001>

Sounds good, does it not?

Then why do we believe it to be Satanic if it has good results? Why did Jesus say through His servant, Ellen G. White, that we should stay away from hypnotism?

"There is, however, a form of mind cure that is one of the most effective agencies for evil. Through this so-called science, one mind is brought under the control of another so that the individuality of the weaker is merged in that of the stronger mind. One person acts out the will of another. Thus it is claimed that the tenor of the thoughts may be changed, that health-giving impulses may be imparted,

and patients may be enabled to resist and overcome disease.” –*Mind Character and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 705

Here is one of Satan’s greatest successful tools. Clothing his dark deeds in a robe of light. It looks good on the outside, but inside it is evil. The greatest achievement that Satan has acquired is the science of controlling the mind of a person.

It is called science because it is something that has been tested and tried through experimentation. Satan has very much studied the human mind. For over 6000 years he has studied it and he has become an expert in the science of controlling people’s minds. He has used hypnosis very subtly and successfully. “For thousands of years Satan has been experimenting upon the properties of the human mind, and he has learned to know it well. By his subtle workings in these last days, he is linking the human mind with his own, imbuing it with his thoughts; and he is doing this work in so deceptive a manner that those who accept his guidance know not that they are being led by him at his will. The great deceiver hopes so to confuse the minds of men and women, that none but his voice will be heard.” –*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 352–353

“The theory of mind controlling mind is originated by Satan to introduce himself as the chief worker, to put human philosophy where divine philosophy should be.” –*Mind Character and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 713

Satan has hypnotized the vast majority of the population of this earth today and they know it not, whether in the world or in a church. He initially hypnotized one third of the angels in heaven. “We are not to tamper with mesmerism and hypnotism—the science of the one who lost his first estate and was cast out of the heavenly courts.” –*Medical Ministry*, p. 110–111. He then was cast out onto this earth and he continued his work here. “Satan tempted the first Adam in Eden, and Adam reasoned with the enemy, thus giving him the advantage. Satan exercised his power of hypnotism over Adam and Eve, and this power he strove to exercise over Christ. But after the word of Scripture was quoted, Satan knew that he had no chance of triumphing.” –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 190

If you have the mind of Christ, you cannot be hypnotized by the devil. An experienced hypnotist (mesmerist) tried to hypnotize Ellen G. White around the year 1845. He claimed he could do so and cause her to have a vision. She stated, “I told him that the Lord had shown me in vision that mesmerism was from the devil, from the bottomless pit, and that it would soon go there, with those who continued to use it. I then gave him liberty to mesmerize me if he could. He tried for more than half an hour, resorting to different operations, and then gave it up. By faith in God I was able to resist his influence, so that it did not affect me

in the least.” –*Early Writings*, p. 21

“Satanic agencies are clothing false theories in an attractive garb, even as Satan in the Garden of Eden concealed his identity from our first parents by speaking through the serpent. These agencies are instilling into human minds that which in reality is deadly error. The hypnotic influence of Satan will rest upon those who turn from the plain word of God to pleasing fables.” –*Counsels for the Church*, p. 324

“It is not by force that Satan takes possession of the human mind. While men sleep, the enemy sows tares in the church. While men are spiritually sleeping, the enemy accomplishes his work of iniquity. It is when his subject ‘understandeth it not’ (Matthew 13:19) that he catcheth away the good seed sown in the heart. When men and women are in this condition, when their spiritual life is not being constantly fed by the Spirit of God, Satan can imbue them with his spirit, and lead them to work his works.” –*Ibid.*, p. 353

Our only safety is: “The Word of God is to be our teacher. If we read this Word carefully and prayerfully, with an earnest desire to understand, we shall be enabled to comprehend the will of God and the doctrine of truth. We shall never become lost in the fog of skepticism or hypnotism.” –*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, p. 129

Satan will keep trying to control the minds of more and more people as the end draws near. “The experience of the past will be repeated. In the future, Satan’s superstitions will assume new forms. Errors will be presented in a pleasing and flattering manner. False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to God’s people. Thus Satan will try to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Most seducing influences will be exerted; minds will be hypnotized.” –*Counsels for the Church*, p. 323

So you think that you are serving God and because you are a member of God’s church you are not in danger of being hypnotized by the prince of darkness? You have the mind of Christ and not of the devil? Adam and Eve thought so, however, Eve was hypnotized by the sophistry of the devil who was disguised as a beautiful animal. Satan also spoke through Peter, one of Jesus’ closest disciples.

Be careful. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” 1 Corinthians 11:13–15

Satan has his greatest success with false religious organizations as opposed to open opposition from the world.

What he has found as a very useful tool is the use of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP). NLP is a way of changing someone's thoughts and behaviours to help achieve desired outcomes for them without the person realizing that you have made them change their mind. It is a very subtle form of hypnotism and it is widely used today.

"The popularity of neuro-linguistic programming or NLP has become widespread since it started in the 1970s. Its uses include treatment of phobias and anxiety disorders and improvement of workplace performance or personal happiness." <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320368.php>

NLP is hypnosis. It is used in the medical field, but it is also widely used in seminars. Some multi-level organizations use this tool successfully. After you have attended one of their meetings you feel compelled to buy into the organization. It seems so good. It is also used in many business circles to bring a desired outcome and hypnotize the minds of the hearers to the speaker's way of thinking.

"Specifically, neuro-linguistic programming is a form of vocal and gestural hypnotism that is used by some public speakers—politicians, for example. In such a context, neuro-linguistic programming is used to psychologically manipulate the listener without his or her knowledge. . . . Neuro-linguistic programming leverages factors such as tone of voice, vocal modulation, pacing, leading, and anchoring to implant a suggestion directly into the subconscious, bypassing the critical thinking factors of the conscious mind. . . . The 'effectiveness' and 'success' of neuro-linguistic programming comes from the practitioner's ability to implant suggestions directly into the recipient's subconscious mind." <https://www.gotquestions.org/neuro-linguistic-programming-NLP.html>

Scary, isn't it? You can be hypnotized unknowingly. And some religious bodies do use it. An article has been written about this very subject. "The purpose of this paper is to present Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), describing its origins, development and principles, and to demonstrate how this method can be used in Religious Education in order to foster and facilitate the teaching-learning process." <https://religioeducation.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/RIG1.2-Ibarra.pdf>

Is it any wonder that Ellen White wrote the following testimony? "I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; . . . The influence of such gatherings is not good. . . . God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the

power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness." —*Early Writings*, p. 124–125. There is great danger that the mind of the evil one will control us at those meetings.

It is very true that many religious organizations use NLP, including Adventist churches. If you attend a fallen church and feel that all is well – the message is wonderful and you were so blessed that you want to continue attending, be careful. You may be being hypnotized by the preacher. "Many apparently good things will need to be carefully considered with much prayer, for they are specious devices of the enemy to lead souls in a path which lies so close to the path of truth that it will be scarcely distinguishable from it. But the eye of faith may discern that it is diverging, though almost imperceptibly, from the right path." —*Evangelism*, p. 590

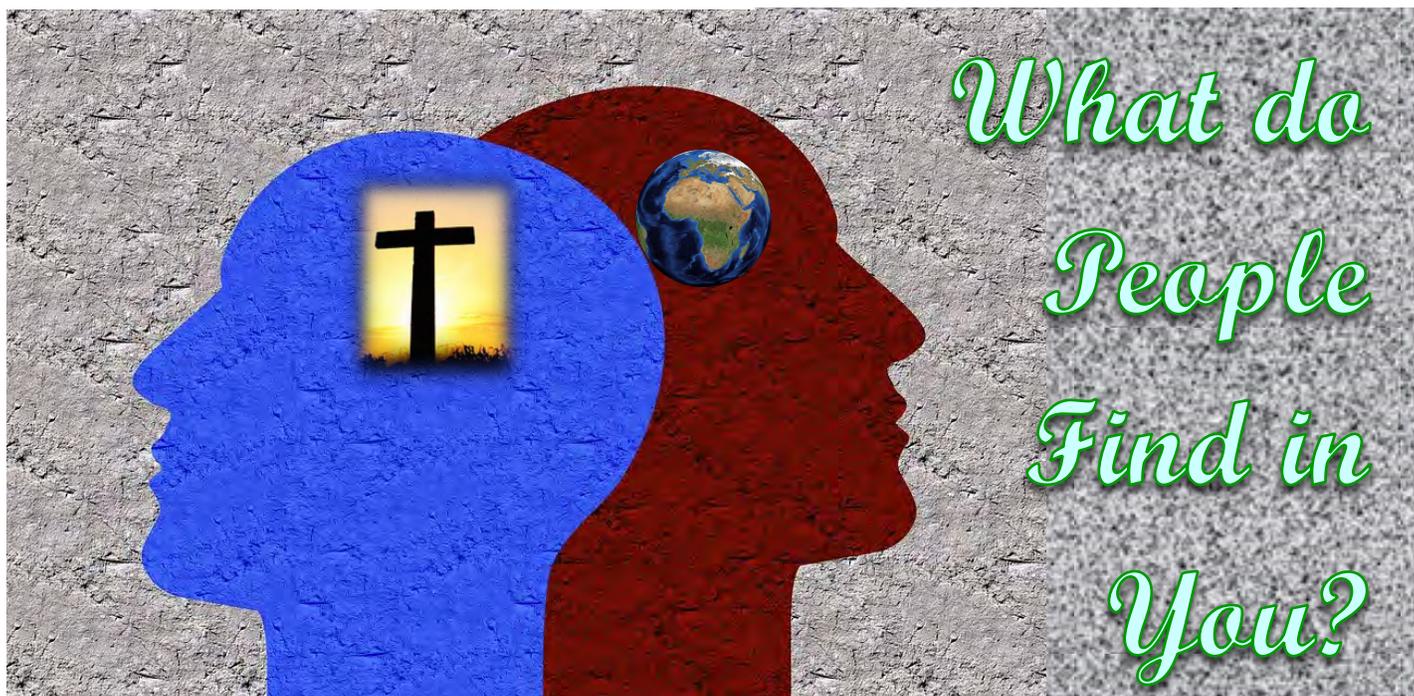
NLP can be used also to manage your inner self. This is how Satan is deceiving the non-religious people. The claim is that the answer to all life's problems is within yourself, you just have to discover the way your mind works and learn how to tap into its resources.

Are you out of your mind? I hope that we can all say that we have the mind of Christ, so that we will not be hypnotized by the powers of darkness and have the mind of the evil one. "Consider your ways." Haggai 1:5. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." James 4:7–8

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:5–8 Amen.

Wendy Eaton





Ask yourself, “Are you the faithful Christian you claim to be? It is very sad but true, that many Christians are like chameleons. When they are at church they act like Christians. When they are out in the world, they act like the world. You need to realize that people are watching you because they know your profession. Not only family members, relatives, workmates, but also those you associate with regularly even though you are not very close to them. What is the image other people have of you? It may be a true image of you or a façade, but in one way or another, you are known.

Even Jesus knew that His reputation was known in one way or another, among the disciple He associated with. “When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?” Matthew 16:13–15. The question was a two-part question: “Who do men say that I am; But who say ye that I am?” This statement clearly shows that Christ knew that society knew Him.

The disciples’ answers teach us a good lesson! “And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” The people had a good reason to think that Jesus may have been Elijah, or Jeremiah or any other prophet because of His behavior—His words and actions. His miracles proved His power and love. His sermons gave an inspiring message of salvation to the nations. Therefore, people believed Him to be prophet. Now ask yourself, what do people think of you? “Who do men say that you are; and who do you say that you are?”

In 2015 I visited some new baptized members and interested souls who were very happy to join the International Missionary Society, SDA Reform Movement in different places in Congo. I held seminars from October to December 2016. The main question I asked was, “Who do you say that you are?” The different answers helped me to know what image they had of themselves. I would the ask, “Then what do men think and say that you are?” The different answers revealed the hope of the believers: “we know that we are a peculiar people, the remnant church, God’s chosen generation in these last days, but men say that we are extremist reformers, the wrong flock. . . .” What a strange and opposite opinion. Imagine you believe that you are the son or daughter of God while men think that you are lost in a fallen church! This is not a problem as long as we are true before God. He knows His people. On the other hand, what a delusion it is to ignore one’s true identity—to think that you are serving God while you are not. This is what we are called to examine carefully so that we may reflect exactly what we are. It is important that we know who Jesus is and where we stand concerning Him.

LIVING EPISTLES: IN EVERY ONE OF HIS CHILDREN, JESUS SENDS A LETTER TO THE WORLD

We are like an open letter to all the inhabitants of the world! “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” 2 Corinthians 3:2–3

“The children of God are called to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the goodness and mercy of the Lord.

As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love. 'As Thou hast sent Me into the world,' said Jesus, 'even so have I also sent them into the world.' 'I in them, and Thou in Me; ... that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me.' John 17:18, 23. The apostle Paul says to the disciples of Jesus, 'Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ,' 'known and read of all men.' 2 Corinthians 3:3, 2. In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him. Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 115

"The work of the Spirit of God in regeneration, preparatory to the work of the ministry in conversion should combine to result in living epistles—lives that give documentary certification of our official status and personal character as children of God. The lives of saints should reflect the image of their Creator and Saviour, Jesus Christ wherever they are. They should be an epistle or letter to the world showing the grace of God in their lives. Do we think, speak, and act as Jesus Christ, the perfect standard of godliness?" <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/living-epistles.pdf>

All men should know that we are disciples of Jesus Christ by our love (John 13:15). He suffered unjust treatment to give us an example of the suffering we will endure (1 Peter 2:18–21). Are you a living epistle of Jesus Christ, who has wrought a great and glorious work of grace in you? Or are you a book that can be read of all men that is not any different from other natural men?

"If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is. Christians who gather up gloom and sadness to their souls, and murmur and complain, are giving to others a false representation of God and the Christian life. They give the impression that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and in this they bear false witness against our heavenly Father. Satan is exultant when he can lead the children of God into unbelief and despondency. He delights to see us mistrusting God, doubting His willingness and power to save us. He loves to have us feel that the Lord will do us harm by His providences. It is the work of Satan to represent the Lord

as lacking in compassion and pity. He misstates the truth in regard to Him. He fills the imagination with false ideas concerning God; and instead of dwelling upon the truth in regard to our heavenly Father, we too often fix our minds upon the misrepresentations of Satan and dishonor God by distrusting Him and murmuring against Him. Satan ever seeks to make the religious life one of gloom. He desires it to appear toilsome and difficult; and when the Christian presents in his own life this view of religion, he is, through his unbelief, seconding the falsehood of Satan."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 116

You may hide your character before the people and think that it is not known, but more people know you than you may realize. Remember that He that sees the secrets of the heart, sees you and knows your intentions.

YOUR DEEDS ARE WELL KNOWN

In Egypt, when the Hebrews were enslaved, Moses wanted to save one Hebrew; he tried his best to hide his secret but people knew.: "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown up, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known." Exodus 2:11–14

From this story we learn that we all need to think carefully about our actions and do only good because even when we think we are in private our actions may not be unknown. Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." "Ye are the light of the world." Matthew 5:13–14. Those two words were very significant at that time and also today.

SALT OF THE EARTH

Salt "is valued for its preservative properties; and when God calls His children salt, He would teach them that His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may become agents in saving others. . . . Christians who are purified through the truth will possess saving qualities that preserve the world from utter moral corruption. Salt must be mingled with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate and infuse in order to preserve. So it is through personal contact and association that men are reached by the



saving power of the gospel. They are not saved in masses, but as individuals. Personal influence is a power. We must come close to those whom we desire to benefit. . . . We shall come close to them till their hearts are warmed by our unselfish interest and love.” *—Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 36*

How can we be a good influence if we are not converted ourselves? It is true that “without a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour it is impossible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. We cannot give to others that which we do not ourselves possess. It is in proportion to our own devotion and consecration to Christ that we exert an influence for the blessing and uplifting of mankind. . . . By our lack of the grace of Christ we testify to the world that the truth which we claim to believe has no sanctifying power; and thus, so far as our influence goes, we make of no effect the word of God. ‘If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.’ *—Ibid., p. 37*

The only one way to become the salt of the earth: “When love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not because of favors received from them, but because love is the principle of action. Love modifies the character, governs the impulses, subdues enmity, and ennobles the affections. This love is as broad as the universe, and is in harmony with that of the angel workers. Cherished in the heart, it sweetens the entire life and sheds its blessing upon all around. It is this, and this only, that can make us the salt of the earth.” *—Ibid., p. 37–38*

LIGHT OF THE WORLD

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.” Isaiah 60:1–2. Isaiah foretold that darkness will cover the people. If we look around us, we can all testify that the Bible is correct!



“But when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the

brightness of the divine presence. Christ’s followers are to be more than a light in the midst of men. They are the light of the world. Jesus says to all who have named His name, You have given yourselves to Me, and I have given you to the world as My representatives. As the Father had sent Him into the world, so, He declares, ‘have I also sent them into the world.’ John 17:18. As Christ is the channel for the revelation of the Father, so we are to be the channel for the revelation of Christ. While our Savior is the great

source of illumination, forget not, O Christian, that He is revealed through humanity. God’s blessings are bestowed through human instrumentality. Christ Himself came to the world as the Son of man. Humanity, united to the divine nature, must touch humanity. The church of Christ, every individual disciple of the Master, is heaven’s appointed channel for the revelation of God to men. Angels of glory wait to communicate through you heaven’s light and power to souls that are ready to perish. Shall the human agent fail of accomplishing his appointed work? Oh, then to that degree is the world robbed of the promised influence of the Holy Spirit!” *—Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 40*

Shine wherever you are, whenever and in in whatever situation you are in. “Jesus did not bid the disciples, ‘Strive to make your light shine;’ He said, ‘Let it shine.’ If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence. If those who profess to be followers of Christ are not the light of the world, it is because the vital power has left them; if they have no light to give, it is because they have no connection with the Source of light. In all ages the ‘Spirit of Christ which was in them’ (1 Peter 1:11) has made God’s true children the light of the people of their generation. Joseph was a light bearer in Egypt. In his purity and benevolence and filial love he represented Christ in the midst of a nation of idolaters. While the Israelites were on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land, the true-hearted among them were a light to the surrounding nations. Through them God was revealed to the world. From Daniel and his companions in Babylon, and from Mordecai in Persia, bright beams of light shone out amid the darkness of the kingly courts. In like manner the disciples of Christ are set as light bearers on the way to heaven; through them the Father’s mercy and goodness are made manifest to a world enshrouded in the darkness of misapprehension of God. By seeing their good works, others are led to glorify the Father who is above; for it is made manifest that there is a God on the throne of the universe whose character is worthy of praise and imitation. The divine love glowing in the heart, the Christlike harmony manifested in the life, are as a glimpse of heaven granted to men of the world, that they may appreciate its excellence.” *—Ibid., p. 41*

“As the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. If the church of Christ were fulfilling the purpose of our Lord, light would be shed upon all that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. Instead of congregating together and shunning responsibility and cross bearing, the members of the church would scatter into all lands, letting the light of Christ shine so that the ‘gospel of the kingdom’ be speedily be carried to all the world.” *—Ibid., p. 42*

RESIST THE PRESSURE TO CONFORM

Take heed that your light become not the darkness. The world to a large degree is controlled by Satan, in God's permissive will. The Apostle Paul calls Satan "the god of this world." 2 Corinthians 4:4. John wrote, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." 1 John 5:19. It is under the control of the wicked one whose influence is seen in most of current society. There is danger of even us becoming darkness and losing our savour.

Today true Christians are under intense pressure from without to conform to the thoughts, goals, and actions of the world. Young people often face great pressure from their peers to drink alcohol, take drugs, and engage in immoral sexual behavior. Not doing these things leaves one open to ridicule.

The pressure to conform is also apparent in young children. They are pressured to dress like the world, talk like the world, and adopt the same attitudes as others in the world.

Why does the world want to pressure true Christians to conform? If they are successful, conformity will soothe the consciences of those who are in the world or are worldly Christians. The life of a dedicated Christian in these last days an open, visible rebuke to their sin and they do not like it. On the other hand, a Christian who joins them in their sinful lifestyle is an open affirmation of their sin. So what are we to do? We should not only resist the pressure to conform, but also stop thinking and acting like the world. I repeat again: Too many Christians are like chameleons. They show sincerity in spiritual matters at church and act like Christians when there; but, when they are out in the world, (especially when they think no one can see them) they act like the world.

Jesus said, "No servant can serve two masters." Luke 16:13. The Apostle James wrote, "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. It is impossible for a Christian to enjoy the acceptance of the world and all its sinful pleasures while simultaneously enjoying the peace and assurance that comes from a saving relationship with Jesus. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3

I ask you to consider, "Who are you? Who do men say that you are? Who do you claim to be? Are you known as you really are? Who do you say that you are? Although we are under relentless pressure to conform to the world, we can resist and remain faithful and continue being the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

"But the sad truth is that millions of professing Christians around the world are searching for a way to strike a comfortable compromise between their convictions and the wicked world in which we live. Yes, [you and I] are under relentless pressure to conform to the world. The devil is always offering to negotiate our values and principles. He rarely uses an all-out frontal assault, but rather by virtue of internal erosion where, little by little, we are pressured to compromise our beliefs in small increments.

"Compromising with the devil is deadly to the spirit and always fails in bringing any lasting satisfaction. Our Lord clearly told us we cannot play the middle. 'He that is not with Me is against Me' (Matthew 12:30). And as the Chinese say, "You cannot cross the river with your feet in different boats." In reality, it is impossible to truly compromise with the devil, because any attempt to compromise with Satan will ultimately become total capitulation. Only by constant dependence on God and personal vigilance can we hack off the tentacles of this monster." <https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/book/e/19/t/compromise-conformity-and-courage>

May the Lord strengthen us to not hide our identity. "We are Seventh-day Adventists. Are we ashamed of our name? We answer, 'No, no! We are not. It is the name the Lord has given us. It points out the truth that is to be the test of the churches.'" -*Letter 110*, 1902

In Egypt, Joseph said finally "I am Joseph"; he made himself known as he is to his ten brothers. Read Genesis 45:5. "We are Seventh-day Adventists, and of this name we are never to be ashamed. As a people we must take a firm stand for truth and righteousness. Thus we shall glorify God. We are to be delivered from dangers, not ensnared and corrupted by them. That this may be, we must look ever to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." -*Letter 106*, 1903. Amen.

Victor Shumbusho, DR Congo



HEALTH MATTERS:



Food Additives: Preservatives and Others

There are over 3000 additives that are approved for use in processed foods; the average American household spends almost 90% of their food budget on processed foods. It has gotten to the point that in order to decipher the many ingredients in processed foods, the consumer would need a chemistry degree. Unfortunately, many of these chemicals are seen as foreign invaders to the body; thus, they can potentially have significant health impacts, including allergic reactions and long-term effects.

In the last two articles, we have learned about several different types of food additives, including artificial sweeteners, artificial colours, and artificial flavours and their potential health implications. Now we will focus this last article in the series on preservatives and two other additives that are common in food that could also pose a health risk to the consumer.

PRESERVATIVES

Many food additives are used as preservatives. The list includes additives such as ascorbic acid, potassium sorbate, sodium nitrite, and calcium sorbate.



These food additives are known as antioxidants; their primary function is to prevent fats contained in the food from becoming rancid (prevents oxidation). Rancidity can lead to flavour and

colour changes. Antimicrobial preservatives inhibit spoilage by preventing the growth of microbes (molds, yeasts, bacteria). Sodium chloride (NaCl), or salt is the oldest known antimicrobial agent. Many processed foods have a high salt content for the purpose of preservation. The group of chemicals known as



preservatives can be found in anything from canned fruits and vegetables, breads, cereals, chewing gum, cookies, potato chips, and vegetable oils. They are also present in the packaging surrounding foods.

BHA/BHT

Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) and butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) are synthetic antioxidants, used as preservatives found in many food products. They are also used in cosmetics, including moisturizers. Currently they are banned in some of the European countries and Japan; however, they are still in use in many other countries, including the United States and Canada. In a study

done on amounts used, in the United States and Australia/New Zealand people consume almost twice as much BHA/BHT per year than is deemed an acceptable dietary intake. There is ongoing controversy about their safety. Studies clearly show that these preservatives can cause cancer in animals. Regarding BHA, a 2011 Report on Carcinogens states that it is “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen.”

Both BHA and BHT have been shown to trigger allergic reactions in the skin when applied topically in creams, and causes hyperactivity in children. BHA also interferes with hormone function. Long-term exposure of BHT in high doses in mice studies triggered liver, thyroid, and kidney problems, and may cause reproductive problems due to its effects on the female and male sex hormones. Both BHA and BHT have been known to impair blood clotting and promote tumour growth when used in high doses. Countries that allow BHA and BHT state that the amounts used by people are at safe levels, therefore there is no need to ban them. However, independent studies conclude that “uncertainties exist, requiring that additional studies be conducted.”

Vitamin E, a natural antioxidant is often used instead of BHA/BHT. Look for the word “tocopherol” in the ingredient list which indicates any number of Vitamin E formulations. Tocopherols do not have the same length of shelf life as do BHA/BHT. So, ask yourself—which is more important, the shelf life or the safety of a food product?

SODIUM BENZOATE

Sodium benzoate is another commonly used preservative used in a wide variety of processed foods. Sodium benzoate has been in use for a century to prevent the growth of microorganisms in acidic foods. It appears to be safe for most people, though they cause hives, asthma, or other allergic reac-

tions in sensitive individuals. A research study done in 2012 showed that sodium benzoate affected leptin release. Leptin is a hormone which helps to control our appetite. If leptin levels change in our body, it can increase appetite. Sodium benzoate can react with ascorbic acid (vitamin C) to produce benzene, a chemical that can cause leukemia and other cancers. This combination is widely used in fruit-flavoured soft drinks. The FDA recommended that soft-drink companies remove it from their beverages; since sodium benzoate is considered safe on its own, the FDA did not ban its use. Some companies have voluntarily removed sodium benzoate from their soft-drinks for this reason.

MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG)



As we learned from the previous article, in the early 1900s, monosodium glutamate, or MSG was extracted from seaweed. Monosodium glutamate (MSG) is derived from glutamic acid, an amino acid, one of the building blocks of protein. Interestingly, glutamic acid itself does not have the unique, savoury “umami” taste, but MSG in food activates glutamate

receptors in our taste buds. These receptors transmit signals to specific areas of the brain, and trigger us to “taste” the umami flavour. Today, MSG is made from corn starch, sugar cane, sugar beets, or molasses.



It is commonly added to food, to intensify and enhance the flavour of dishes. It is found in a variety of processed foods like frozen dinners, salty snacks and canned soups. It is also often added to foods in restaurants and at fast food places.

By law, monosodium glutamate (MSG) is **not** regulated as a food additive; however, it is often added to processed foods. The use of MSG in food is controversial. It is considered a flavour-enhancing ingredient yet does not have a flavour of its own. While there is no law that limits the amount of MSG that may be added to food, the law suggests that the amount of MSG added should be at levels consistent with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). In other words, only the smallest amount needed to enhance the flavour should be added to the food.

Health Canada has determined that the use of MSG is not a health hazard to consumers. However, they do acknowledge that some individuals who consume MSG may exhibit negative physical symptoms indicative of an allergic response or sensitivity. For those people, the effects of eating foods containing MSG may include: a burning sensation, facial pressure, headache, nausea and chest pains appearing about 20 minutes after consumption and disappearing about two hours later. Such reactions have generally been reported to be temporary and not associated with any long-term adverse health effects. Because of this potential sensitivity, many

processed foods and restaurants advertise their products as containing no MSG.

Various studies done on MSG have suggested that there are toxic effects related to its consumption. In mice studies, high levels of glutamate are able to pass through the blood-brain barrier on newborn mice, and cause brain damage. It is suggested that because a human infant also has an immature blood-brain barrier, this could cause glutamate to pass into their brains from MSG in infant formulas. Other potential toxic effects include nervous system disorders, obesity, liver damage, reproductive malfunctions, cardiovascular disorders, weight gain, metabolic syndrome, headaches and high blood pressure.

Very small quantities of MSG are required to enhance the natural basic flavour in foods such as soups, casseroles, salads, gravies, and vegetable dishes. Because MSG is so prevalent in processed foods and in the restaurant industry, people are consuming it in higher than anticipated doses over a lifetime. Restaurants and food manufacturers are not required to indicate the actual amount of MSG used in their products. Health Canada states that MSG consumed in moderation is considered safe; however, any substance consumed to excess can be toxic, including MSG. Even though this continues to be an ongoing debate in the food industry due to its prevalence in our food supply, enough evidence is present to suggest that people should avoid MSG to reduce potential health risks associated with its use.

To determine if MSG is present in a food product, look at the ingredient list. It can be listed as monosodium glutamate, hydrolyzed vegetable protein (HVP), hydrolyzed plant protein (HPP), autolyzed yeast, soy extract and protein isolate. MSG will most likely be found near the bottom of the ingredient list because it is typically added in small amounts to a product.

CARRAGEENAN

Carrageenan has a long history. Centuries ago, people who lived along the coast in Ireland and Brittany used a type of seaweed called Irish Moss, boiling it with milk, and turning it into creamy pudding.

Currently, carrageenan is a common food additive, derived from red seaweeds, which is then processed with alkali (neutralizes acids), to create a substance that is considered a “natural” additive. It is found in many natural and organic foods because it is a plant-based ingredient. However, along with MSG, which is also derived from plants, we find that “natural” does not always mean safe. Consider all the plants that cause toxic effects on the human body, for example, tobacco and poison ivy,



and you quickly realize that many plants can produce harmful effects on our health. Many plants are also medicines and should not be ingested as food. Therefore, we need to be aware that even foods labelled as natural may not be safe for consumption. Thus, checking ingredient lists and having knowledge about food additives is vital to our health. Again, avoiding processed foods as much as possible is the healthiest choice we can make.

When carrageenan is processed with acid instead of alkali, it changes from the “undegraded” form to a form called “degraded carrageenan.” This form of carrageenan is not allowed in food because it triggers the immune system to respond, recognizing it as a dangerous invader; this leads to significant and prolonged inflammation—in fact, it is used on laboratory animals to test the effectiveness of anti-inflammatory medications. It is so potent that degraded carrageenan is widely recognized as a carcinogen, i.e. it causes cancer. The concern is that our stomachs are a very highly acidic environment, and studies in animals prove that carrageenan can be transformed into the degraded form in the intestines, exposing the body to this strong carcinogen. Scientists have been concerned for decades that even the food-grade form of carrageenan causes harm. In testing food samples, it has been shown that many foods also contain degraded carrageenan as well as the approved undegraded carrageenan.

Carrageenan adds no nutritional value or flavour to foods or beverages. It is widely used by the food industry as a substitute for fat, and to thicken non-fat or low-fat foods, including dairy products such as yogurt and ice cream. It creates a fatty “mouthfeel” to low-fat foods, to enhance the food’s appeal. It is also used in dairy substitutes such as soymilk and coconut milk as well as a stabilizer in beverages that would separate unless shaken or stirred. It is even found in foods such as organic frozen pizzas and nutrition bars. Many canned pet foods also contain carrageenan. Some manufacturers have substituted guar gum, xanthan gum, locust bean gum, and gellan gum for carrageenan in their foods, knowing that consumers are becoming more aware of the dangers of carrageenan, and are avoiding products that contain it.

As early as the 1960s, re-

searchers found that even undegraded carrageenan used in foods triggered gastrointestinal diseases in animals due to its inflammatory effects, including ulcerative colitive-type diseases and colon cancer. Then in 1981, two scientists conducted a review of all the studies done on carrageenan since the 1960s and raised concern about its widespread use as a food additive. They determined that the harmful effects of carrageenan were associated with the fact that it degrades when it passes through the gastrointestinal tract. They recommended extreme caution in the use of carrageenan as a food additive.

Researchers studying the effects of carrageenan on the human body found that using carrageenan on a daily basis creates a constant state of inflammation in the body. Chronic inflammation in the body is associated with over 100 diseases such as heart disease, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease, rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease and cancers. Many people who experience belly “bloat”, to irritable bowel syndrome, and more serious inflammatory bowel diseases find that eliminating carrageenan from their diet results in vast improvements in gastrointestinal health. More recent research shows that carrageenan impairs proper insulin function and causes glucose intolerance, both of which lead to diabetes. Carrageenan also reduces the activity of certain beneficial enzymes in human cells.

In 2008, Dr. Tobacman, the author of the 2001 Environmental Health Perspectives review, urged the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to prohibit the use of carrageenan in food. It was shown that the amount of carrageenan in foods is enough to trigger an inflammatory response. She concluded that, “The widespread use of carrageenan in the Western diet should be reconsidered” due to evidence that “exposure to undegraded as well as to degraded carrageenan was associated with the occurrence of intestinal ulcerations and neoplasms [cancerous tumours].”

The FDA chose to rely on research done by the food industry, and ignored additional studies that were done since 2008; therefore, in 2012, they denied the petition to remove carrageenan from the food supply. In 2016, the National Organic Standards Board voted to have carrageenan removed from organic foods, as they were able to determine that there were other substances that could replace carrageenan. In 2018, the United States Department of Agriculture, which oversees the National Organic Program decided to ignore the recommendation and carrageenan is still used widely in food products, including organic foods. The USDA determined that carrageenan is safe to use. Many food producers claim that there is no other natural substitute for carrageenan that provides the same effect in processed foods, therefore they continue to use it; however, many producers of organic foods have voluntarily removed carrageenan from their products. Other organizations feel that this decision undermines “the



integrity of the US Organic label” and the future of the Organic label, as it brings into question whether organic food products are truly safe for consumption.

For over four decades, scientists have been urging government bodies to remove carrageenan as a food additive, but have been unsuccessful, and it is allowed as an additive in many countries around the world. The increase in ulcerative colitis worldwide has been linked to processed foods, and more specifically to carrageenan. There are strong ethical issues that come into play with governments and food regulators continuing to allow carrageenan to be used as a food additive despite studies that have proven over and over again that it is extremely harmful to the human body.

THE GRAS “LOOPHOLE”

Originally, there was a GRAS (“Generally Recognized As Safe”) designation in a law that was developed in 1958 that required companies to demonstrate the safety of food ingredients. However, there was also a GRAS “loophole” that was intended to spare only the most time-tested substances from the onerous pre-market approval process; examples of these are substances such as vinegar, salt and baking soda that were widely used and known to be safe.

However, in 1997, The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the United States introduced a new ruling that allowed food companies to decide for themselves which ingredients qualify as GRAS, and then report these designations to the FDA on a voluntary basis; because this reporting is voluntary, many ingredients have been designated as GRAS without any notice to the FDA. Therefore, proof of safety via independent checks and federal oversight is lacking. Critics of this ruling state that consumers are put at risk because critical independent checks on the safety of new ingredients are not necessary; the manufacturers of the ingredient are allowed to designate their products as GRAS. Once there is a GRAS designation and the ingredient is in our food supply, it is very difficult to reverse the designation. The FDA rarely takes further action, even when there is evidence that it is not safe. This is what is taking place in the case of carrageenan, even when independent studies show that the ingredient can cause negative health effects in animals and humans. For the past two years, the Environmental Defense Fund has been challenging the GRAS ruling, seeking to have the process deemed “unlawful”. As of April 2019, they are awaiting a ruling from the Federal court judge that heard their case.

This leaves us with the question, if the food companies are allowed to decide on the safety of their products, who is monitoring this obvious conflict of interest? The answer is—nobody. Since 1997, thousands of substances have been added to processed foods under this new rule. And many of these have never been put through an evaluation process outside of the manufacturer who produced them. How many of these are causing issues with our health without our knowledge? Lisa Lefferts, a food additive expert from the Center for Science in the Public Interest states that “the sys-

tem for ensuring that ingredients added to food are safe is broken.”

And it continues, food producers conduct their own studies on their additives and they lobby the government to continue to allow these additives to be used in the production of processed foods, often contradicting studies that are done by independent groups which have no financial gain in either keeping or removing an additive from food products. As consumers, we need to be aware of the effects of these additives, and avoid them in order to protect our health. If enough people avoid foods that contain harmful ingredients, perhaps the producers of these foods will start to take notice when their finances suffer because of it. As consumers, we need to take action and pressure the food industry to remove harmful ingredients from our food supply, by deciding not to eat foods that are full of chemical additives, and by recognizing that “natural” does not always equate to “safe.”

CAN WE TRUST OUR FOOD?

In this article, several countries laws have been mentioned; however, the use of food additives and the laws regulating these substances are similar in many countries around the world. Food additives affect each of us over a lifetime of consuming chemicals and substances that are unnatural. The American Academy of Pediatrics warns about the harm of food additives in children. Because they are smaller, the amount they get is larger in comparison to their body mass. Their bodies are still developing so they are at a higher risk of harm; and because they are young, these chemicals have more time to do damage.

As we have seen throughout this series of articles, just because an additive is allowed in a food, does not make it safe. Many additives have been allowed in processed foods that have later been proven to be harmful to the human body. For example, additives such as trans fats, and certain artificial sweeteners and colours have been removed from foods when evidence of their harm became undeniable. And, if an additive has been shown to have cancer-causing properties, then no amount would be considered safe. How many more chemical additives are contained in our food that may be proven to be harmful to us, after we have consumed them for many years? Our safety lies in avoiding processed foods as much as possible, and adhering to the natural diet given to man at creation.

“Some fall into the error, that because they leave meat they have no need to supply its place with the best of fruits and vegetables, prepared in their most natural state, free from grease and spices. If they will only skillfully arrange the bounties the Creator has surrounded them with, and with a clear conscience parents and children unitedly engage in the work, they would enjoy simple food, and would then be able to speak understandingly of health reform. “ *—Appeal to the Battle Creek Church, p. 80*

The Importance of Obedience in Small Duties



The light of a beautiful Sabbath was fast fading, and the last golden gleams fell softly upon the form of a light-haired little girl who sat by a cottage window, her head leaning upon her hand as if deep in thought.

The sun had departed like a grand old monarch, leaving behind him a glory of purple and gold more beautiful than his own full splendour. Yet the little girl saw nothing of all this beauty. She was thinking of the story in the Sabbath school book she had been reading,—the story of a child's life; and she wondered if all that happened in the story could be really true.

Jennie was pondering in her troubled brain a question which the reading of the book had brought. What could it be? Evidently it was not to be answered easily, for her fact only grew more clouded, until at last she resolved to ask the help of some wiser mind.

Fortunately, Jennie knew that she had but to make her perplexities known to her mother and they would all be explained in the clearest way; so, seating herself in her rocking-chair by her mother's side, she said:—

"Mamma, I want you to tell me something."

"Well, dear, what is it?"

"I've just finished by Sabbath school book, you know, and it's just perfectly lovely; all about the sweetest little girl; only she was always doing so many kind things for everybody; and I've been trying to think what's the reason little girls in books always have so many chances for doing good, and little girls like me, who are out of books, don't have any at all."

"Not any at all?" questioned the mother. "Is that really so?"

"Well, no, not quite, I suppose," said Jennie, "but then they are just nothing but the tiniest little bits of things. There's never anything big and splendid for real little girls like me to do.

"Now, Susy Chrystie, in the story, took her little sister May out for a walk, and just while they were crossing a bridge, May pulled her hand away from Susy's, and tried to walk on the edge, just as close as she could; but in about one second her foot slipped, and she would have fallen off into the water if her sister hadn't jumped right to her, and caught hold of her dress, and pulled her back all safe.

"Now just think, mamma," said Jennie, her blue eyes opening widely as she spoke, "Susy Chrystie saved her little sister's life; wasn't that a splendid, big something to do?"

"Yes, my dear, that was a brave thing for a little girl to do, for even an older person might have been too frightened by seeing the danger May was in, to act quickly; but if my little Jennie will always try to keep quite still, and never scream when any sudden fright comes to her, she too may be able to think quickly of the best way in which to help herself or others."

"But, mamma, you know that nothing ever does happen to me; and besides, I haven't any little sister or brother."

"Never mind, my child, if you will do carefully every little duty and obey cheerfully even when you cannot see why you should, you will please your heavenly Father and give me comfort and pleasure, and perhaps some day you may have a chance to do something brave, but you have to be faithful in the small duties first."

Jennie's face grew brighter, as it always did when she had confided her griefs to mamma, and for many days she watched and waited anxiously, thinking that at any time something might happen.

And so it did; for one day a letter came from Jennie's aunt, Mrs. Graham, saying she would come and spend a few days with her sister, and bring with her little Willie, a boy about two years old.

Of course they were very welcome, and Jennie greatly enjoyed playing with her cousin. He was a charming fellow, but very fond of having his own way; and one of his great enjoyments was to plunge two chubby hands into Jennie's thick, light hair, and pull it with all his might.

Of course this was a short-lived pleasure when any older person saw him, but when they were alone, Jennie would endure the pain patiently until she could coax the little fellow to let go.

She never gave him a cross word, and when the nurse would say impatiently, "Indeed then, Miss Jennie, it's a wonder you don't just slap his hands!" she would answer gravely, "Oh, no, he's so much littler than I am."

Yet Jennie was not perfect, and though she generally tried to do what was right, sometimes, like the rest of the world, she wanted to do what she knew was wrong.

One bright afternoon, when she was playing in the yard, her mother called her:—

"Your aunt and I must ride to the station directly, to meet uncle and your father, and I would like to have you go quietly into the nursery and sit there until Maggie returns from an errand; it will not be long."

"But Willie is sound asleep, mamma, he doesn't want me," said Jennie, who was anxious to stay out of doors.

"Yes, dear, I know it, but we shall feel safer to have someone in the room, even if he is asleep; something may happen if he is alone."

Jennie, however, was so unwilling to sit quietly in the house that even these familiar words did not attract her, but with slow steps and a sullen face she obeyed her mother's wishes.

She knew quite well how slight a thing she had been asked to do, and although at another time she would not have objected, just now, when she wanted to do something else, it seemed very hard to give up her own will.

Her conscience was so disagreeable, too, for it would keep saying all the time, "I am ashamed of you, Jennie! Can't you do this for your kind mamma, even if you do want to do something else?" How tiresome it all was, and how she wished she could "just do as she liked!"

Thoughts like these were filling Jennie's mind as she stood looking out of the nursery window; but all at once she was aroused by the strong smell of burning wool.

Turning quickly, the child grew almost rigid with fear as she saw, just in front of her, a small flame burst out from the rug before the fire, and not far from the crib where

Willie lay sleeping. In an instant, however, the thought "What shall I do?" was followed by the remembrance of what her mother had often said, "If in any way your dress should ever take fire, you must try to smother it at once; never run away, but throw yourself down, or wrap yourself in anything to be found."

Remembering this, she hastily caught up the other end of the rug, which was large and heavy, and threw it over the flame. This quite extinguished it, for it had only just started into life when Jennie saw it; but in her zeal she tore off the bedspread and blankets, crowning all with two large pillows upon which she seated herself, for by this time the child was so confused that she hardly knew whether it was the rug or her own dress which had taken fire.

Now she wanted to see somebody, and, not daring to move, she began to scream. This wakened Willie, who added his voice to the uproar, and soon brought the bewildered nurse to the rescue.

In less than an hour the carriage returned, and Jennie was kissed and praised more than she had ever been in all her happy life, by her parents and her aunt and uncle; for they saw quickly what had happened, and trembled to think what might have been.

That night as Mrs. Graham bent to give Jennie her good-night kiss, she whispered, "May God bless you, my thoughtful little niece, for you have saved your cousin's life today!"

"Why, did I really?" thought Jennie; "how glad, how glad I am; for if I hadn't been there, the fire would have caught the crib, and, oh, that would have been awful!"

Then, as memory brought the scene more clearly before her, and she recollected how her conscience had fairly pushed her into the room, her little face grew red with shame, and she softly said, "I will never fight with conscience again, for if I had had my own way, I could never have saved poor Willie's life."

It is always important to obey our parents and to obey God when we are asked to do something. Although we may not want to do it, or we may be busy and think it not so important, it is most important to obey and listen to our conscience right away. It is the small duties in life that builds character.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."
Luke 16:10





“Return back to the old paths, respecting our bodies.”

This educational day of learning new things, hearing God’s voice speaking to us, ended with the final call for the day “Return to the old paths, respect for the House of God.” Once again we were reminded via a PowerPoint presentation of the sacredness of God’s temple, “Reverence My sanctuary, hallow My Sabbaths; come back to the way how it was before the fall of man into sin.”

Friday morning was heralded in with fresh manna, “Back to the old paths, believe, obey and teach others to do the same (Respecting God’s Word, Respecting our bodies, respecting God’s House).

Once more the previous calls of the day before were wrapped up in one great reminder, “Come back, God is speaking, hear His voice speaking to you.”

This was followed up by two workshops:

- “Back to the old paths, Christian behaviour on the Sabbath Day.” The Sabbath is the day when God comes down to man, and abides with us until the setting of the sun. Respect His presence, His holy angels, His Holy Spirit, spend the holy hours with Jesus; be careful what you do on this day.
- “Back to the old paths, Advice on preparation duties for the Sabbath Day.” To prepare for the Sabbath Day, start on Sunday, keeping Sabbath in mind, with Sabbath preparations; do not leave everything until Friday.

The Sabbath was welcomed in with the last call for the day: “Back to the old paths, return to purity in worship.” Gladly we sang together the theme song, “In times like these we need a Saviour.” God is calling upon mankind to come back to purity in worship.

Sabbath morning was welcomed in with our theme song and the strong call, “Back to the old paths using the Bible as our only source of authority.” The writings of E.G. White are under attack, the Bible is under attack; God is calling us back to the Bible and the Bible only. The Spirit of Prophecy was given to us to build upon godly, heavenly and Biblical principles. Hold on to the original editions of the same, and be careful in how we look at and understand the compilations. We are living in fearful times when so many things of the past are being manipulated to say what they did not originally say.

God is calling, “Come back, please hear My voice, I am speaking to you,” was the call at the Divine service. “Back to the old paths, return back to doctrinal accuracy.” Jesus is still in the Most Holy Place. The bells and the pomegranates on the hem of the High Priest’s garment are still making a sound, assuring us Jesus is still there on our behalf. For how long we do not know, so remove sin from your life,

A spiritual youth convention was conducted over four days, from the 24th to the 28th of April 2019, at the church grounds in Toongabbie, Sydney, Australia.

The church members prayed for weeks for this youth convention to be a special, deep heart-searching, spiritual convention due to the lateness of the hour and the time of trouble lying ahead, just around the corner, for God’s people

Much prayer had been offered for wisdom in choosing the appropriate theme. With the help of the Lord, the following theme was selected: “Back to the old paths, hearing the voice of God speaking to you,” with the theme song “In times like these, we need a Saviour “.

The youth convention was opened Wednesday evening, with the tender invitation, “Back to the old paths.” God is calling man to return to Him. Then followed the touching words of the theme song.

On Thursday day morning the call went out fresh again, “Return back to the old paths, respect the Word of God “ An appeal was made to return back to hear the voice of God speaking to us through His Sacred word, to listen and obey all that the Lord asks us to do. Yes, in times like these we need the Bible.

This was followed by several workshops, and a cooking demonstration; at lunch we enjoyed the freshly prepared dishes from this workshop.

A PowerPoint presentation workshop on health was presented, encouraging men, children, as well as young women, to learn the art of cooking. It was stated, ill-prepared food preparation is a sin due to its damaging effect on the human body.

During the afternoon meeting, a new call went out again,

live for that which is eternal. The most important question is not the Sunday law, but when Jesus shall leave the sanctuary, when the bells and pomegranates on the hem of the High Priest's garment shall stop making a sound, then probation will close. This is more important than anything else. Depart from sin, do not compromise, and live for Jesus.

The last call of the day, closing the Sabbath was "Back to the old paths, Return to pure morals and holy living."

Keep your worship clean, come back to respecting God's word, respect your body, reverence My sanctuary, come back to health reform, prepare for the Sabbath day, be careful how you behave on God's holy day. Keep your worship clean with the help of the Lord. Return to pure morals and holy living. When we are in the holy hours be careful what you say, think, and do upon the sacredness of the Sabbath day. Pay reverence as you enter and exit His sanctuary. God is here to bless His people; strive to receive this special weekly Sabbath blessing.

A campfire was lit out in the church yard and the evening was spent in socialising and relaxation. The cool late autumn/early winter Australian night was warmed up to the glowing fire coals and the happy sounds of voices. Two sisters from Peru were present and much information was shared between them and the rest of the youth about the church in their country and the work of God here in Australia.

Sunday was a great day. The call came fresh and early in the morning; once more God is calling His people "back to the old paths, in modest clothing." The fashions of the world have taken its toll on God's people. "Come back," the call came, cover up, the International Missionary Society has godly principles of health, expressed through modest

dress. Rearrange your wardrobe, men and women, you are God's Ambassadors. Ladies, do not wear that which pertains to a man, that is an abomination before the Lord; the same applies to men. "In times like these we need a Saviour, In times like these we need the Bible, be very sure, your anchor holds and grips the solid rock. That Rock is Jesus, yes He's the One, that Rock is Jesus the only One, be very sure, your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock."

A bus trip was made to the South Coast town of Kiama, where we would see the "Blow Hole" (forceful wave action causing the water to come high into the air from a hole in the rock at the sea shore). Joyful was the bus ride; happy songs were sung, outside the nature was cool and fresh, and we were happy to be out in God's creation, together. The lunch was tasty and spiritually we were in tune for the next event. A drop-off point was arranged, and we went out two by two, with well-stocked shoulder bags full of evangelistic materials; we ventured into town doing missionary work.

We are looking forward to the day when the redeemed from all ages shall gather before our Heavenly Father's throne. Great will be the surprises in heaven, when among the redeemed will be residents from Kiama, praising together with us our Heavenly Father and His Son, and the sweet influence that the Holy Spirit had upon these precious souls.

We thank the Lord for speaking to us at this youth convention, calling upon us to come back to the old paths, to hear His voice speaking to us and to say, "Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

From the Australian Youth Department





Resurrection Gives us Hope and Reason to Live!



Ilse Dering was born September 18, 1934, in Riga, Latvia—a little known country in the Baltic region of Northern Europe. It is little known to us because it was occupied and annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940, only regaining its independence more than fifty years later.

She was the youngest of seven children of Julius and Ana Dering. Three of their older children died in infancy from an epidemic of smallpox that swept through the Caucasus—a region between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea—where the family had fled in order to escape severe famine in their homeland. Ilse loved to tell me touching stories about little Ralph, Herbert and Irene, whom she had never known, but whom she longed to meet on the great resurrection morning. Her favorite was the story about little three-year-old Ralph, who lay dying in the hospital. He had asked his Daddy for a little stuffed toy animal, but then learned that Daddy was not able to bring him one—either he couldn't find any or he just couldn't afford to buy one. When Ilse would get to the heart of the story, which was little Ralph's guileless reply, "Don't worry, Pappi, I will play with the lions on the new earth!" you just couldn't stop the tears from flowing. Before leaving the Caucasus to return to Riga, her Dad had painted a picture of their three little graves, but during the family's many moves it had somehow gotten lost. Recalling that sad fact brought tears to her eyes, but she always ended her reminiscing on a positive note: Jesus is coming again soon, and she will be united with all of them!

Yes, as she grew older, Ilse would tell me stories and know about Ilse's early life I learned from Margie described as a true epic of God's providence in Holmstroem—a woman of beauty, a mother about the various families and individuals with the Holmstroems, among whom prominently. Margie writes that Julius pitiable, kind, and extremely talented and band and Margie's grandfather), feel

Ilse was blessed with a rich heritage of fear, war and poverty but they remained sion, the Derings—Ilse's parents, brother little Ilse—left Latvia in the spring of 1941, many. They stayed in a refugee camp near daily and shared his faith with others, he and Leipzig prison. Mother Ana, Ruth, and little Ilse release. "When will they come out?" Ana asked mitted no crime. When will you release them?" Irritat-over to the women, and shoved them roughly outside. "NEVER!" he bellowed as he violently slammed the door behind the women. But God worked a truly amazing miracle, one similar to the story of the imprisoned apostles Paul and Silas, the earthquake and the jailer, and their release.

Father Julius was then sent to Leipzig to work as a lithographer, while Kurt was transferred seventy miles away to make wooden boxes in Dresden. In February 1945, Dresden was the target of Allied bombing. In four separate attacks spread out across three days, over 1200 Allied planes dropped more than 3900 tons of explosives, killing approximately 24,000 people. Kurt, Ilse's older brother, decided this was a good time to escape. He found an abandoned bicycle and pedaled the seventy miles to Leipzig. Unbeknownst to him, Leipzig had also been bombed the previous year. In the early morning hours of February 20, 1944, 700 Allied bombers had dropped 2300 tons of bombs on the residential and industrial areas of Leipzig. When Kurt finally arrived in Leipzig, the devastation he found was indescribable. He was sure his family had perished. But when he arrived at the place where his family had lived, to his surprise, there, amidst the flattened ruins of Leipzig, stood an untouched row of houses. He rushed to the doorway and pounded breathlessly. When the door opened, he could hardly believe his eyes. Every single member of his family—including 9-year-old Ilse—was safe! I remember Ilse telling me how terribly frightened she was when the air sirens would sound and they all had to run to the shelter! She could not stop trembling the whole time. And she didn't want to eat what little food they could find—she missed too much the special sweet-and-sour bread they had in Latvia!



experiences from her childhood, but some of what I Holmstroem Seely's book, *Marie*, that has been the life and times of her Grandmother Marie of courage. In the biography, she also writes whose lives were blessed by their friendship members of the Dering family feature and Ana Dering, Ilse's parents, were hos- they always made August (Marie's hus- comfortable.

faith. Her family experienced trials of true to their God. To escape Soviet inva- Kurt and his wife Ruth, sister Kaethe and when Ilse was only six years old, for Ger- Leipzig. Because father Julius read his Bible his son Kurt were arrested and taken to the visited the SS office to ask for Julius' and Kurt's the officer. "They're not criminals. They've comed, the officer stepped out from behind his desk, strode

Sadly, because of the starvation and brutality endured by him while in prison, Ilse's father's health deteriorated, and he died suddenly of a heart attack in 1947. Ilse told me that he had left the house and was on his way to buy fresh milk for her when he fell, face down, on the street! She was thirteen at the time. Every time we've traveled to Germany, Henry and I, and last time Wesley also, visit his grave in the old cemetery in Kirchberg. Even though he was only a few months old when his Grandfather Julius died, Henry still cries as he reads the inscription on the tombstone: "Hier Ruht in Gott. . ." ("Here rests in God . . .")

In her room in our home, Ilse was surrounded by her beloved father's paintings and would point out to me places she remembered from her childhood—Riga and the River Daugau, Bad Mergentheim, where baby Henry, her brother Kurt's son, was born in January 1947 at the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) refugee camp, Kirchberg, and various forest scenes and landscapes. However, her most precious painting was that of her Mommy, as she called her, that was done by her beautiful and gifted older sister Kaethe.

When the war was over, the Dering family wanted to immigrate to America but they needed sponsors. Their old friend Marie Holmstroem—the protagonist of the book mentioned earlier—found sponsors for them and was also able to help with the necessary costs. Their friendship, which began before the Nazi and Soviet upheaval of World War II in the Baltic countries, has continued among their descendants for decades, and now reaches across two centuries and two continents. While crossing the Atlantic in March 1952, a fierce storm broke out and their ship took on water. It arrived limping into Brooklyn's harbor.

The Derings settled in New York. Ilse grew up, went to school, was a hard worker and talented designer, and eventually became a partner with Ed and Adele Slutsky on W. 36th Street in the Garment District of Manhattan. In 1976 she lost her much loved, devoted mother Ana. One of the sweetest things I had ever heard Ilse tell me is that her Mommy loved me, and *that* she told me repeatedly the last several months. She built a beautiful home in Boca Raton, Florida, where she moved in her golden years. For many years she enjoyed the closeness of her family—her brother Kurt and his wife sister Kaethe and husband Bruno and their moved to Florida and lived nearby. Her three children Perry, Sidney and Debby also loved them all. She was a caring sister and a loving and generous aunt. Only her nephew Henry and his family lived far away—in California. In the end, we were the closest, because she lived with us, in our home! She grew to enjoy living with our family and all the attention and care she got from us, our son Wesley, his wife Jelena, and our two lovely granddaughters, Angela and Katarina. As you can see in the Youtube video, when she could no longer walk, Wesley and Jelena literally carried her down to the car for her doctor's appointment. (<https://youtu.be/NewQSFAt2EI>). God's ways are



Ilse's father, brother, and sister were very gifted artists. Even now our walls are graced by Grandfather Julius' watercolor paintings and Aunt Kaethe's pastel drawings and oil paintings. Ilse inherited a great sense of style and eye for design. In the waning months of her life, I tried to encourage and inspire Ilse by reading and talking to her about the future inheritance of earth's saved pilgrims. I appealed to that aptitude of hers by painting for her word pictures of the mansions Christ has prepared, the ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, the widespreading plains swelling into hills of beauty, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages, the occupations and pleasures that brought happiness to Adam and Eve in the beginning, the life in garden and field. She loved these verses from the Messianic prophet Isaiah: "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isaiah 65:21–22) And because she loved animals, we would talk about how "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatted calf together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." And how "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:6, 7, 9) She would often squeal with delight and grab my hand and ask if I will be with her and stammer, "I, I, I... love you!"

Through beautiful imagery, I tried to make the attractions of heaven familiar to her thoughts, so that her memory's hall would be hung with pictures of celestial and eternal loveliness. Once I asked her, "Why do you love me?" She pointed up and said, "Because you love the Lord."

Verica Dering

“The Lord's children are never absent from His mind. Even the birds are the objects of His tender solicitude. ‘Behold the fowls of the air,’ Christ said; ‘for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?’ If the Lord cares for the birds,



has He not a special care for those who believe in Him? His love and care flow earthward to His children. He knows us by name. He knows the very house in which we live, the name of each occupant. He has at times given directions to His servants to go to a certain street in a certain city, to such a house, to find one of His children.

“Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Saviour died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all to Himself. He says, ‘My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.’ He cares for each one as if there were not another on the face of the earth. Each child is loved by Him with a peculiar love.” – *The Signs of the Times*, April 16, 1902