

# The Sabbath Watchman

DECEMBER 1976

## GO FORWARD

*A motto for the New Year*

With steadfast heart and true  
Go forward on your way;  
God give you strength to do  
The duties of each day,  
So daily may this thought  
Your heart with courage fill,  
"I can, because I ought,  
And, by God's help, I will."



## THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY Part 2

COMMUNICATION from God to man has been going on since man "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden" of Eden. Genesis 3:8. Through the Holy Spirit, the Creator has imparted divine light to the world through revelations to His chosen servants.

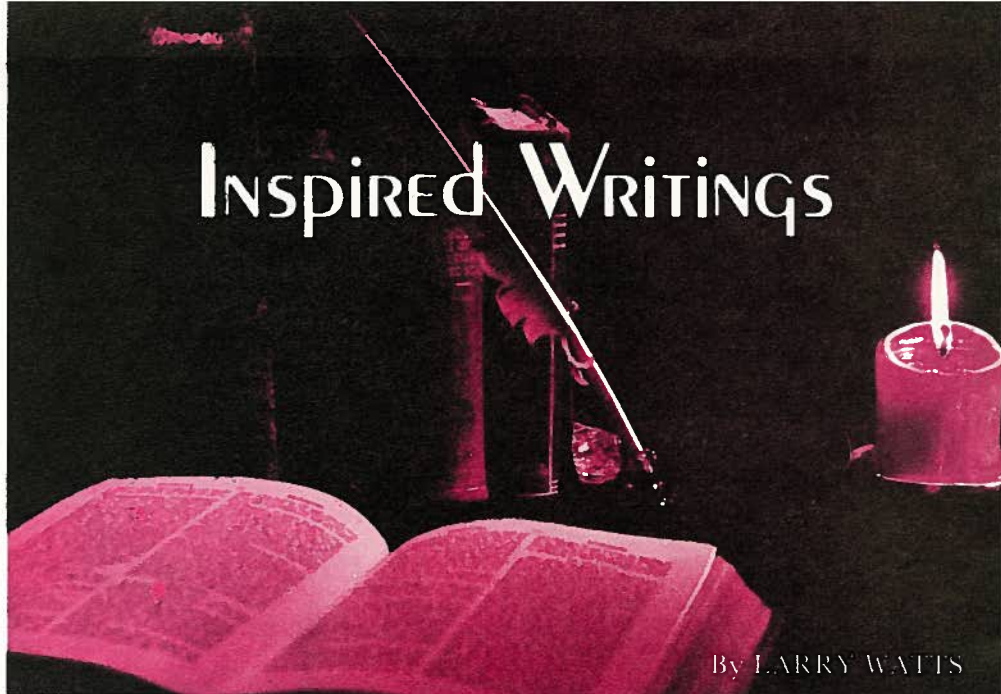
For the first twenty five hundred years of human history, those who had been taught directly by God handed their knowledge down to succeeding generations by word of mouth. This chronicle was told to Moses in vivid language by his mother, Jochebed. It is of great interest to trace back Bible chronology, for it shows that Jochebed could have heard the story from her father Levi; he, from his grandfather Isaac; and Isaac, from Shem, who survived the great flood. Shem knew Methuselah well, and Methuselah lived upon the earth for 243 years with Adam. Not until the time of Moses was inspired revelation first embodied in written form. While tending the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law, Moses was instructed to record the book of Genesis under the guidance of God's Spirit. Thus was begun the written record of divine inspiration.

Since Moses, a collection of writings "given by the inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16) has been gathered. We shall look at how they have been compiled and translated and how we are to view them.

### Compilation

The oldest of the inspired writings is the Hebrew Old Testament. Jesus Christ made a threefold division of these writings in Luke 24: 44: "... All things must be fulfilled, which were written in [1] the law of Moses, and in [2] the prophets, and in [3] the psalms [the first book of the writings, the third division] concerning Me." The *law of Moses* consisted of the first five books of the Bible, also called the Pentateuch or the Torah. The *prophets* encompassed an "earlier" group (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings) and a "later" group (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets).

## INSPIRED WRITINGS



By LARRY WATTS

The *writings* included the remaining books, which were collected and organized by Ezra and Nehemiah shortly after the restoration of Jerusalem in B.C. 457.

One group of writings which was not considered inspired was the Apocrypha, a group of Jewish writings dating from the second and first centuries B.C. Martin Luther recommended that they "are books which are not equal to the Holy Scriptures, but profitable and good for reading." *The Zondervan New Encyclopedic Reference Edition Bible*, p. 814g, gives the reasons why Protestants reject them as inspired: "While Protestants study the Apocrypha for the light it throws on the life and thought of pre-Christian Judaism, they reject it as inspired Scripture for the following reasons:

"1. The Apocryphal Books were not a part of the Old Testament of Jesus and the early church.

"2. Ancient Jewish writers who used the Greek Bible, notably Philo and Josephus, were acquainted with the Apocrypha but never quote it as Scripture.

"3. Church fathers who were familiar with the Hebrew canon clearly distinguish between Canonical and Apocryphal writings.

"4. The Apocryphal Books were never declared to be authoritative Scripture until the Council of Trent (A.D. 1546).

"5. Most readers feel that the Apocryphal Books represent a lower level of writing than that of the Canonical Scriptures."

The copy of the Old Testament in use at the time of Christ was not the original Hebrew but a Greek translation known as the Septuagint. It was from the Septuagint that Jesus and the apostles quoted when referring to Old Testament passages and in so doing showed that they considered it to be the word of God.

Still today the Jews feel that divine inspiration ended with Ezra. And the Christian world in general believes that the work of God's Spirit in giving the written word ended with the work of the apostle John in The Revelation. Furthermore, the New Testament is considered the primary rule of faith by most Protestant churches, and some assert that the apostle Paul's writings have preeminence. Some look upon the Old Testament as the early church did upon the Apocrypha. This is a denial of Christ's stamp of approval placed upon the Old Testament.

To place "the Old Testament books on the same level with other ancient literature, is more harmful for the Christian church than the former indifference toward the Apocrypha, since it destroys the faith of the believer in the divine origin of those books of the Bible of which Christ said, 'They are they which testify of Me.' (John 5:39).

"Every Christian believer must therefore be convinced of the divine origin of these Old Testament books by means of which the Christian apostles proved the soundness of

their faith and doctrines. That these books have survived the several national catastrophes of the Jewish nation in antiquity, and the insidious attacks of dark forces inside and outside the Christian church, is strong proof that these writings have enjoyed divine protection.” —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 45.

## Translation

Until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other related ancient manuscripts, it could have been argued and often was that no one could be certain that the manuscripts used for translation were original and perhaps changes had been made to alter meanings. But that argument has lost all its force, because these recent finds, dating from 1947, have given us almost the entire Bible in the form used by Christ and the apostles. These manuscripts are many centuries older than the earliest known copies, which were the basis of the earliest Bible translations.

“Although these newly discovered manuscripts show many variations in spelling, grammatical forms, and scribal peculiarities, no major change appears anywhere. The scholarly world has been amazed to see that since the time of Christ the text of the Hebrew Bible has experienced no change of any consequence whatever. These manuscripts reveal clearly that copyists and readers of the Hebrew Bible had so great a reverence for the Word of God that they transmitted its text accurately and faithfully.” —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 34.

These recent discoveries have been one of the reasons for the increased interest in the Bible and the many new translations now available. It is good to see all this interest and enlightening to compare Bible with Bible as well as scripture with scripture.

The older translations into English—those dating from before the time of the King James Version to the Revised Standard Version of 1952—made a “formal” attempt to faithfully come as close to the literal meaning of the original Hebrew and Greek texts as possible. The concern was to preserve the sentence structure and meaning of

the original in a way that was also in good style.

More recent versions, however, such as *Good News for Modern Man*, the *New English Bible*, *The New Testament in Modern English*, and *The Living Bible, Paraphrased*, are more interested in giving what they think to be the meaning of the passage in an easy-to-read form, rather than in translating literally and possibly leaving some ambiguity. For this reason, these translations are more than translations. They are interpretations of Scripture.

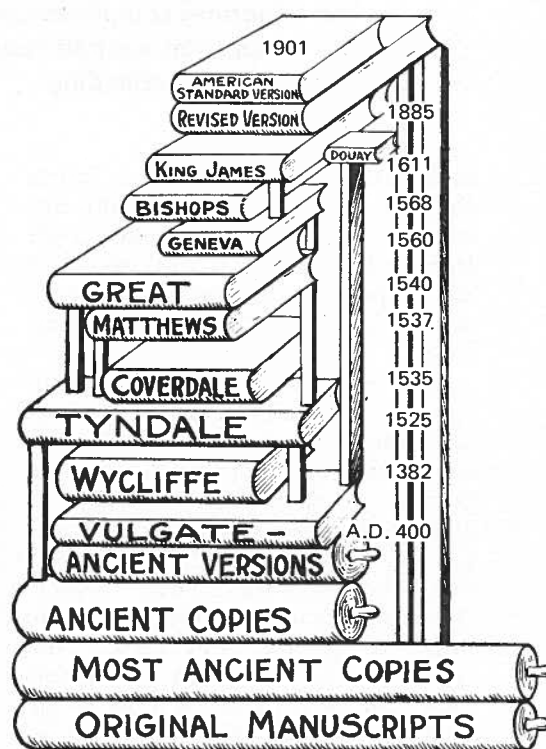
The problems of translation are many, and understanding them aids one in studying the Bible in his own language. In the first place, a literal translation does not always lend itself to a clear reading. But when the original text is perhaps obscure in its exact meaning, it is better to let the reader decide for himself as to the meaning than to give the passage a message that God’s word may have not intended.

Furthermore, it was difficult for the ancient writers to express abstract thoughts, for the Hebrew language has no compounds, except proper names, almost no adverbs, and few adjectives. Its compact sentence structure is forceful and unsurpassed in expressing religious poetry in a vivid, beautiful way; but in translation, it loses some of its original nature. For example, the Hebrew 23rd Psalm contains only 57 words, while in the King James Version it has 122; and the 6th Commandment contains only 2 words, while in English it has 4.

Verb tense poses a unique set of problems, for Hebrew verbs express action only as being complete or incomplete, not as past, present, or future, as do English verbs. The translator must sometimes scrutinize the content to determine the exact time frame of the writer’s thoughts. Because this was not always understood, recent translations tend to reflect the time element of Hebrew verbs more accurately than did earlier translations.

“... Modern translations may not always represent the actual time viewpoint of the writer, owing to the fact that a decision as to the writer’s viewpoint often, particularly in predictive prophecy, depends

## THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE



The above drawing shows the gradual development of the English Bible as well as the foundation upon which each successive version rests.

upon the reader’s concept of inspiration. One who believes in the gift of prophecy will recognize that the prophet is projecting his mind into the future, often the remote future. But one who denies the validity of the predictive element in prophecy will say that the prophet is simply describing past events. . . . In order to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the precise time element in a given prophetic statement, the reader must (1) have a valid concept of inspiration, (2) discover the time viewpoint of the author in terms of his own concept of inspiration, and (3) interpret the verb tense in harmony both with the requirements of Hebrew grammar and with the author’s time viewpoint.” —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 27.

Despite the difficulties of translation, it is important to realize that it is not the individual words which are inspired, but the thoughts and ideas. God’s servants came from widely differing backgrounds and each related to what he saw and heard from his own experience. It is said by some that the Bible is “a bunch of fairy tales” and can’t be



**The Scriptures compliment and agree with themselves,  
and all apparent contradictions are not the fault of God  
but of our understanding**

understood. Their reason is often that they do not wish to practice what it teaches or they have seen those who profess to follow it but are hypocritical. Neither of these are excuses for refusing God's message.

The great purpose of the Scriptures is to reveal to man the plan of salvation. Every seeker for knowledge will look upon the simple truths of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ as God's appointed way. And beneath these truths so easily understood are mysteries which cause the mind to ponder and inspire the sincere seeker for truth with reverence and faith that the Bible is the word of the living God (Deuteronomy 29:29).

### **Interpretation**

Once we have determined what writings are indeed God's direct message to mankind, there are certain principles to be applied in studying them.

The first is our attitude: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, . . ." John 7:17. A willingness to accept the message given will lead the believer into a broad, deep, and exalted array of truth—and near to his Creator. To understand the Scriptures is to be humbly led by the same Spirit which gave them. If we seek to understand with a teachable attitude those things revealed to us, we will not only know which writings fall into the category of the Spirit of Prophecy but will see the divine principles contained in them as the embodiment of everything Christ was upon earth. Our faith will tell us that the Scriptures compliment and agree with themselves and all apparent contradictions are not the fault of God but of our understanding.

Secondly, in inspired writings, much more is included than just general teaching and doctrine. There are examples of men's lives as well. These are given that we may learn the basic principles by which they

were guided in their particular circumstances and apply those principles in our own situations. Though we may not be in the same position as a Biblical person—such as Daniel, a president of Babylon—that does not mean we have nothing to learn from his life. The principles by which he lived can be applied by each of us in his own circumstances.

As a third principle, in studying inspired writings we need to have a good grasp of basic world history in order to understand the Biblical settings, individuals, and prophecies. Today there is rampant misunderstanding of what is to happen in the future simply because popular individuals are going back to fulfilled Old Testament prophecies and saying they will happen in the future. An understanding of especially ancient Jewish history as well as religious movements since the time of Christ are essential in understanding our own position in Biblical prophecy.

The arrangement of the Old Testament books is not always chronological. For example, the book of Ezekiel was written from about B.C. 593 to 570, whereas the events of Ezra and Nehemiah, though placed much closer to the beginning of the Bible, occurred much later—from B.C. 539 to 330. The prophecies of Ezekiel, pointing to the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, were fulfilled in the events recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah. Therefore, the current preaching by many churches that Jerusalem and the temple will be rebuilt in our day is incorrect, based on the historical facts of the restoration of the city and temple which already occurred. This shows how important it is to know the historical setting and timing of each of the Bible's books. When figurative language is used in a text, this indicates that a literal interpretation should not be given.


Finally, all inspired writings have a worldwide scope and a timeless application. They are for the high and the low, the rich and the poor,

the educated and the uneducated. Similarly, they are not just for mankind as a whole but for each individual as well. At no time can we say, "That counsel is right for him, but it doesn't apply to me." All the inspired writings are for everyone, and when we personally accept this principle, we will open our minds to unlimited possibilities for God's Spirit to work in us and educate us to dwell in God's presence.

Inspired writings are not bound by what men think. The Bible has been shown time and again to be far ahead of its time. This is a characteristic of all inspired writings—they are the message of God to us, and they never make a mistake. They are of a quality far removed from the writings of mere mortals. This is because the writer was not writing his own thoughts; he was writing the message from God, the Creator, the Ruler of the universe, and usually did not himself understand immediately what he was writing or why. But years later as events unfolded, what he wrote was shown to be true.

The Holy Spirit of God—the Spirit of Prophecy—gave God's message through divinely inspired men. Therefore, man needs the Holy Spirit's guidance to determine what is inspired and then to understand the message itself. "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for My mouth it hath commanded, and His spirit it hath gathered them." Isaiah 34:16.

Since the Scriptures promise that the "testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17), which "is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10), will be with God's church through the end of time, it will be necessary for each follower of Christ to have discernment as to what writings are directly inspired messages from God and which are not. The Biblical counsel is, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1.

Therefore, let us test all things by the divine criteria and incorporate their heavenly principles into our daily lives. A new world is available to everyone who does this! 





It's a small word—but so important.  
And it takes insight and conviction to stick by it!

By MICHAEL SWENSON

**C**HRISTIANS bear the heavy responsibility of being true witnesses to their friends and neighbors, who see and hear them each day. Regardless whether he was born into the Christian faith or only recently found Christ, everyone bears the same responsibility. He must say, "No," to worldly values. We will categorize these worldly values as follows: Pride, worldly companions and amusements, false education, bad health habits, and erroneous religious concepts.

### Pride

The Bible says, "You have been fooled by your fame and your pride, living there in the mountains of Petra, in the clefts of the rocks. But though you live among the peaks with the eagles, I will bring you down, says the Lord." Jeremiah 49:16, *The Living Bible*.

The mountains, clefts, and eagles symbolize the neighborhoods where we live. If we place a high value on pride and the things of this life, we will be fooled. If we let pride rule, we will not have a home in heaven. Pride kills faith; and a dead faith is not a saving faith. Certainly we want to say, "No," to pride, so let's define it more clearly so we can be successful. The dictionary defines pride as "a high opinion of one's

own qualities; conceit; self-respect." Do you meet people who are carbon copies of this definition? Let me be more specific: Do you fit this definition?

For the school boy or girl, pride can come to the one who reads the fastest, spells the best, or excels in sports. For the young person, it may mean the one who dresses the best, has the fastest car, or has the prettiest girlfriend or most handsome boyfriend. And for the older ones, the person with the most beautiful home, most expensive car, or the best, most high-paying job may fall into pride. These are just a few possibilities. Actually, every person is in some way subject to pride unless he firmly says, "No!" to it, realizing that the blessings come from God, not himself. The Bible says not just that a proud person *may* fall but that he *will* fall. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Proverbs 16:18.

It is important for children to excel in school. As young people, we must find the right person with whom to spend the rest of our life. As older people, we need a good job and house and car. When we get these things with determined effort, we can escape the danger of pride by saying simply, "Praise the Lord."

Give the credit to the One who has made it all possible, and you will be successful.

### Improper education

In schools and universities, we are taught many theories by the teachers and professors. Most obvious are the sciences, in which researchers preach their theories and attempt to prove evolution by their findings. But there are too many missing links in the preaching; the theory of evolution is like a sinking ship. On the other hand, artifacts consistently back up the Bible account of creation found in Genesis. How clear the Bible is, in contrast to the theory of evolution; it takes much more faith to believe in evolution than to adhere to the creation story of the Bible.

Schools often teach that we should be involved in politics and in the way countries are run. But how can the Christian vote for someone who favors military aid and condones war? And how many honest voters would have ever thought that a U.S. President could be so involved in a Watergate, or that the Vice President would have to resign? In Canada, the Prime Minister and his government are constantly having to answer for the wrongs committed. The Bible says in Daniel 2:20, 21: "Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." The Christian who is perfecting his or her character by allowing the grace of God to be a part of his life and searching for lost souls has no time for politics. We can confidently leave the choosing of leaders to God.

Also we are taught that it is patriotic to go to war and fight for our country and the freedom for

which it stands—or to fight the spread of communism. Yet when we look at the prophecies, we know that God will not allow man to destroy the earth. And we know it is a sin to kill or participate in destruction of our fellowmen. If we want to be commandment keepers, we will say, “No,” to military service.

Wherever we go for education, we can say (with much proof to back up our beliefs), “No,” to evolution, participation in government intrigue, and any teaching that conflicts with Christian ideals.

### **Bad health habits**

Today the hospitals are full. More doctors are needed; new cures are being sought for new diseases. What has brought about all these health problems? What is the cause?

When God created man, He provided the fruits and grains, and later vegetables, for man’s diet. Much emphasis is put upon meat as the main source of protein and other nutrients. But researchers find that the greater the meat consumption, the higher the risk of heart-related diseases. Furthermore, the so-called enriched foods have less nutrients than if they had been left in their original state, and chemical or animal additives in no way benefit health. More and more people are saying, “No,” to their taste patterns in favor of more healthful eating habits. The vegetarian diet is the path to follow. Remember, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Many times I have turned down meat, only to have the opportunity to witness to friends about true health practices and the meaning of service to God.

Drugs, tobacco, tea, coffee, and soft drinks are also detrimental to our bodies. They contain stimulants and harmful substances that have adverse effects upon our beings. Drugs are very harmful to the brain and nervous system. Tobacco causes cancer and heart disease, and it is very costly both in wasted money and wasted people. Coffee, tea, liquor, and many soft drinks not only contain stimulants but also many poisons. When you desire to serve the Lord, it is no problem to say, “No,” to these harmful indulgences.

### **Amusements and companions**

When we go somewhere or are asked to go somewhere, we are wise to ask ourselves the question, “Is the Lord with me? Would Jesus go to this place?” If we cannot positively say, “Yes,” we should positively say, “No!” True recreation—truly uplifting recreation—is when we can help someone and receive a deep satisfaction in knowing we have been of service to others. We should say, “No,” to spending on amusements money that can be used in promoting God’s cause or helping someone who is in need. Many amusements, if we go to them, mean breaking the Sabbath. We must say, “No,” to worldly amusements.

A worldly friend can also pull us away from Christ. Worldly companions want to go to these amusements; in fact, they are bored by the simple, uplifting beauty surrounding us. Seeking companions who love the Lord and want to learn more about Him is our only safe course. Samson was a very godly man, but a worldly wife and friends proved his ruin. Daniel, on the other hand, had God-fearing friends, as did Paul, and they lived successful Christian lives.

We have been put on this earth to be servants and missionaries. We want both to help others and prepare our characters for eternity. An important way to help others and ourselves is by firmly saying, “No,” to worldly amusements and friends who draw us away from God.

### **False religions**

The Bible says that in the last days there will be many false Christs, teachers, and churches. We definitely live in the time described in Matthew. So what is our only safe guide? “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20.

If there were only two churches in each neighborhood—with the sign in front of one reading, “Christ’s church,” and in front of the other reading, “Satan’s church”—surely most people would go to Christ’s church. However, Satan makes it much more difficult than this. Many churches teach much error and

some truth, but are still popular. Many other churches teach much truth and some error, and they are popular also. But we will say, “No,” to all these churches if we adhere to Isaiah 8:20. There is one church that teaches the whole truth, and it is not so popular.

Take, for instance, the idea of Sunday worship. The Bible and the example of the patriarchs and Jesus show that worship on the holy Sabbath is necessary. The fourth commandment states that it is a requirement of God. Yet man has changed it, and the majority of “Christians” follow it.

The Bible clearly states that when we die we go to sleep; yet many religions teach an instant heavenly home, or purgatory, or instant, everlasting, burning hell. Here again, most people believe a lie instead of the Bible. There are many false teachers and false Christs. The many preachers who claim to be the “Saviour of the world” fulfill the prophecy of Matthew 24:5, 11, 23, 24.

The churches talk of peace between denominations and people across the world, yet there is no peace. The false religions of today are following a course which is contrary to God. For this reason, we must say, “No,” to them!

### **What to say, “Yes,” to**

Now, after looking at the many aspects of the world to which we must say, “No,” to what should we say, “Yes”?

True Christians feel peace of mind, not because they are always saying, “No,” but because they know to whom to say, “Yes.”

For example, suppose you were invited to a party to be held on a Saturday night and the Dorcas leader in the church asked if you would assist her that same evening in helping a family in need. If you said, “No,” to the party and “Yes,” to helping the family, you would be blessed on many sides. But if you did the opposite, you would be showing that you are not a Christian. True Christians know when to say, “Yes,” and that is why they are happy.

Or when someone contacts you and is teaching false doctrines—and there are plenty of these people

today—search out the things he says, using your Bible. It is your responsibility to show him what is true. And when a friend comes with new truth and you can prove it from the Bible, say, “Yes” to it, and you will gain new joy.

Much satisfaction is found when you know the truth. The person who says, “Yes!” to searching truth is the person who finds enduring happiness as he follows this new-found truth. And as he tells others about it, he discovers more happiness when his friends follow it.

Remember—saying “No” to ungodly things will be a safeguard in life; and saying “Yes” to the right things will bring everlasting joy. ☩

#### NEW TIME

Time is a treasure;  
How shall we use it?  
We can make useful,  
Or can abuse it!  
Only the Giver  
Can make our hearts wise,  
Teaching us daily  
The New Time to prize.

Time is a treasure,  
So view it, my soul!  
Keep all its spending  
’Neath watchful control;  
Employ each moment  
In God’s holy fear,  
And He will ensure thee  
A Happy New Year.

—Anonymous

## THE CHARACTER THAT GOD APPROVES

By ELLEN G. WHITE

**T**HE youth need to be instructed, carefully and prayerfully, that they may build their characters upon the abiding foundation. The reason so many make grievous blunders is that they do not heed the teachings of experience. The counsel of parents and teachers is lost upon them, and they yield to the temptations of the enemy. God loves the youth. He sees in them great possibilities for good, if they will realize their need of Christ, and build upon the sure foundation. He also knows their trials. He knows that they will have to battle against the powers of darkness that strive to gain control of the human mind; and He has opened the way by which young men and young women may become partakers of the divine nature. . . .

Character does not come by chance. It is not determined by one outburst of temper, one step in the wrong direction. It is the repetition of the act that causes it to become habit, and molds the character either for good or for evil. Right characters can be formed only by persevering, untiring effort, by improving every intrusted talent and capability to the glory of God. Instead of doing this, many allow themselves to drift wherever impulse or circumstances may carry them. This is not because they are lacking in good material, but because they do not realize that in their youth God wants them to do their very best.

If the youth today would stand as Daniel stood, they must put to the stretch every spiritual nerve and muscle. The Lord does not desire that they shall remain novices. He wishes them to reach the highest point of excellence. He desires them to reach the very highest round of the ladder, that they may step from it into the kingdom of God.

The youth who leave their homes, and are no longer under the watch-care of their parents, are to a large extent left to choose their own associates. They should remember that the eye of their Heavenly Father is upon them, and that He sees their every necessity, their every temptation. There are always to be found in schools some youth who, by their course of action, reveal that their minds are cast in an inferior mold. Through unwise training in childhood, they have developed one-sided characters; and as they have advanced in years these defects have remained to mar their experience. By precept and example, these souls lead astray those who are weak in moral power.

Time is golden, dear youth. You must not imperil your souls by sowing wild oats. You cannot afford to be careless in regard to the companions you choose. Dwell upon that which is noble in the characters of others, and these traits will become to you a moral power in resisting the evil and choosing the good. Set your mark high. Your parents and teachers, who love and fear God, may follow you with their prayers day and night, they may entreat and warn you; but all this will be in vain if you choose reckless associates. If you see no real danger, and think you can do right as well as wrong, just as you choose, you will not discern that the leaven of wickedness is insidiously tainting and corrupting your mind. . . .

God has given the youth talents to improve for His glory; but many apply these gifts to unsanctified, unholy purposes. Many have abilities which, if cultivated, would yield a rich harvest of mental, moral, and physical acquirements. But they do not stop to consider. They do not count the cost of their course of action. They encourage a recklessness and folly that will not listen to counsel or reproof. This is a terrible mistake. Young men would be sober-minded if they realized that God’s eye is upon them, that angels of God are watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. —*Messages to Young People*, pp. 163-165. ☩

# SOUND THE WARNING!

**E**VERY day we hear threats of impending disaster from many quarters. These warnings run the gamut from cries that man will soon run out of fuel to fearful predictions that California is about to sink into the ocean. It seems as if planet earth is on a collision course with destruction. All these cries of doom can cause a person to react in several different ways.

1. He may ignore the warnings—any or all of them.
2. He can despair.
3. He can look for solutions to the problems.
4. He can acknowledge a true, imminent danger and make the necessary preparation.

God Himself has given many warnings to mankind, both individually and collectively. Far different, however, are the warnings of the Lord as compared to those given by man. Every God-given warning is accompanied by a carefully explained way of escape.

## Cain

One such warning was the one given to Cain. He was warned that his path of trying to circumvent the explicit command of God would lead to sin. With the warning was given the remedy—if you do well, you will be accepted. It is sad to note that Cain ignored the warning given by God in His mercy. In not heeding and obeying, he became the first murderer. He brought great distress upon his family and a curse upon himself.

“And in the process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.” Genesis 4:3-7.

## Noah

Noah was given a warning along with a solution. A flood was to come to destroy sin and sinners as well as the entire creation of God on earth. Noah was given instruction to build a great ship for his salvation and the salvation of many of God’s creatures. His response to this warning and the way of escape provided were of marked significance. Had Noah ignored the warning, you and I would not be here to tell the story. The earth would have been completely destroyed. How thankful we should be that that warning was heeded by a few! The warning in Noah’s day affected the history of the entire human race. Often, however, the Lord has given warnings to single individuals, such as Cain.

“And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. . . . And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

“Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. . . . And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. . . . Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” Genesis 6:7, 8, 13, 14, 17, 22.



# Nebuchadnezzar

Another person who received an individualized warning was the great king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. Actually he received several warnings from God, but one was for him personally. It took the form of a dream of a great tree which was to be cut down. He did not understand the dream until Daniel came to explain it to him. Daniel, as he explained the dream, implored Nebuchadnezzar to repent and turn from his evil ways of pride and self-sufficiency, and so be spared the evil of the warning of God. Daniel's pleas were soon forgotten, and the threat was carried out. The king lost his mind for seven years. He spent this time in the fields eating grass and acting like an animal. In the end he was saved and his mind and position were restored; but think what trouble could have been spared him if the warning had brought reformation!

"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. . . .

"Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity." Daniel 4:13-16, 27.

## Our warning today

In our time we are faced with a drastic triple warning in God's word. This warning is depicted as being given by three consecutive angels, each one bringing an additional warning and call for action. These warnings are further amplified by an additional angel who repeats the message and gives it greater strength. These warnings reach to the culmination of all things. These warning messages will cause all to decide which side they wish to be on.

This threefold message of warning will be given to all the inhabitants of this earth by God's people. Each of us is called upon to spread the warning far and wide. Sound the warning! Soon the mark of the antichrist—enforcement of a universal Sunday law—will be applied.

To ask to be excused from giving this great warning is to risk disaster. Jonah had to spend time in the prison of the great fish before he was willing to sound the warning. Let us learn from his experience, heed the warning, and sound it to everyone we can today. By placing ourselves fully on the Lord's side, we will be saved from destruction as well as gain eternal life.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:6-12.

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:1-4.









By BARBARA WATTS

# PEACE ON EARTH

**A**T this time of year, one hears over and over again in songs, in sermons, in news comments, and even in political speeches the phrase "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." The angels' song to the shepherds, a message to the world, but most of all to the individual heart, is colored—and sometimes tainted—by the context in which it is placed.

Not quite 14 years ago, Pope John XXIII, undoubtedly the most open-minded pope of all time, issued *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), an encyclical "To the Venerable Brothers the Patriarchs, Primes, Archbishops, Bishops and Other Local Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See, to the Clergy and Faithful of the Whole World and to All Men of Good will: On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty." This was an extraordinary address, for encyclicals have always been reserved for the Catholics alone.

The theme of the encyclical was how the pope believed peace could be achieved throughout the world. While affirming that peace of any kind is impossible outside God's law (which the Roman Catholics themselves have deliberately broken by setting aside the Sabbath of the fourth commandment and substituting their own day), nevertheless great pains were taken to outline the way governments and individuals are to relate to each

other. Although not overtly saying that the papacy should take over the reins of world government, instead of leaving them to many sovereign states, the implication was there—for example, "Today the universal common good poses problems of world-wide dimensions, which cannot be adequately tackled or solved except by the efforts of public authorities endowed with a wideness of powers, structure and means of the same proportions: that is, of public authorities which are in a position to operate in an effective manner on a world-wide basis. The moral order itself, therefore, demands that such a form of public authority be established." —Paragraph 137.

Succeeding paragraphs declared that the United Nations is a step in the right direction, but the history of the Roman Catholic Church and its policies in Catholic-dominated countries show that the church believes it should be the one ruling the world. What would be its method of ruling, were it given the opportunity?

Paragraph 160 showed it: "... It must not be forgotten that the Church has the right and the duty to safeguard the principles of ethics and religion, but also to intervene authoritatively with Her children in the temporal sphere, when there is a question of judging about the application of those principles to concrete cases."

And the very fact that "All Men of Good Will" were addressed indi-

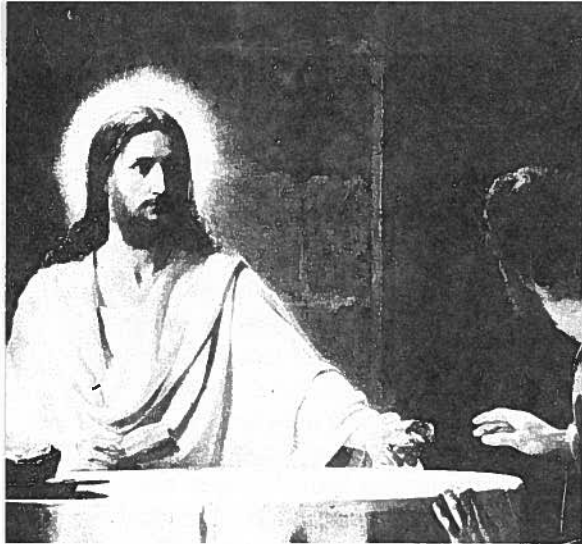
cates that the papacy would relish taking over all government, and you can be certain it would tolerate no dissent, just as it has never tolerated dissent.

Is this the peace promised by the angels? If so, why did Christ say, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword"? Matthew 10: 34. The song of the angels was and is a promise to the individual human heart, not to the world under the present rulership of Satan. Christ's life and sacrifice secured forgiveness of sin and the way to holiness for every single one who accepts that life and sacrifice. What greater peace is there than to know that one's past wrongs have been washed clean and power is given him to live in tune with his Maker? There is no greater.

That song is the promise of redemption through Christ. At the same time, it shows the results of living according to the supreme law of heaven, for obedience to it—all of it, not just part of it—lifts us above transgression, above temptations that lead to transgression. "God desires us to be happy, and He gave us the precepts of the law that in obeying them we might have joy. When at Jesus' birth the angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men' (Luke 2:14), they were declaring the principles of the law which He had come to magnify and make honorable." —Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 308.

Furthermore, it is a promise—a prophecy—of the total eradication of all that is sinful, which will occur at the end of the plan of salvation. When Satan, sin, and sinners are cleansed from the earth—and thus from the universe—that song will reach its complete fulfillment. Then peace on earth, that peace which comes from Christ's life being lived by every inhabitant of earth, will be reality. It can be in the individual life now, but then it will span the entire globe—"for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:9.





By BETTY KRAMER

# Christ,

## A season for giving

**A**T this season of the year, much thought is given to gifts. Much time and effort are expended in selecting and purchasing, or perhaps making, the perfect gift for Aunt Mabel, Cousin Jack, or friend Jamie. Thousands of dollars are spent for this purpose. Merchants take advantage of the prevailing mood and encourage it to their profit.

Though selfishness and greed may prevail the rest of the year, it is customary, traditional—yes, expected—to give to others during the month of December. Of course, one expects others to reciprocate! And so December is a hurried and often worried month for many. I have heard customers complaining about *having* to give to friends, neighbors, and relatives, longing for this “gift crazy” time to pass. They were planning to give gifts, not because they loved these people, but merely because they knew it was expected of them! No love is shown in such cases, and I can assure you much jealousy, ill will, and downright hate are generated by such a practice.

In light of these prevailing ideas regarding gift giving, I would like to bring out a few thoughts concerning Christ as the true Giver of all good things and thus our perfect example in gift giving.

There is certainly nothing wrong with wanting to give someone a gift. God implanted the desire to give within man’s heart at his creation. God Himself is generous. Nature is generous. Giving is good. I would like to draw your attention higher to the prime example of generosity—Christ, the Lord.

## Christ’s gifts

Christ gave everything He had to give—for you, for me. He gave up His lovely home in heaven, the adoration and praise of the heavenly hosts, His position on the right hand of God, to come down to this sin-cursed earth to suffer shame, reproach, exhausting toil, deprivation, insult, torture, and death. His was self-forgetful giving, with no seeking for His own benefit. His giving involved fulfilling, submitting, yielding, obeying, and dying. No physical weariness or hunger deterred Christ from serving the needs of those who flocked to hear Him preach or to be healed. No grasping for power marked His earthly life. No hatred or thought of revenge tinged His replies to the high priest, the soldiers, or the jeering mob during His unfair trials. No pride, jealousy, or laziness hindered Him from exercising the role of the servant at the last supper with His disciples. Christ knew the secret of giving—total commitment.

What did Christ actually give? Not only His life on the cross, but a living example for us to follow—a sinless life of continual victory, unceasing prayer, and a close communion with the Father and all nature. He gave us a reason for living, a goal worth achieving, and a hope for the future.

One of the last things Christ gave to His disciples before His ascension was peace. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27.

The marvelous quality of Christ’s giving is that it is past, present, and future. Today He has promised to be with us and help us. He assures us of full pardon for yesterday’s mistakes and sins. Then daily, hourly, momentarily we begin a personal, intimate walk with Him, receiving His righteousness, His purity, and

His goodness. He knows how to give the best gifts, the choicest ones, the priceless ones.

## His promises

“For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psalm 84:11.

“The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.” Psalm 29:11.

“And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.” Ezekiel 11:19.

“Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” Psalm 37:4.

“And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; . . . For every one that asketh receiveth; . . .” Luke 11:9, 10.

The most precious promise of all is found in John 10:28: “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.”

Yes, Christ is the true Giver, the genuine Giver, the Giver of the best gifts!

## What can we give in return?

Considering what Christ has done, is doing, and what He will do for us, can we not do something in return? Not from a sense of duty merely, but from a thankful heart. “. . . Freely ye have received, freely give.” Matthew 10:8.

First of all, we can give our hearts. “My son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways.” Proverbs 23:26. The Lord also asks us to yield our bodies to Him in the best possible condition, and He wants us to use them to His glory. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Romans 12:1. Note that the Lord



## Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord

By S. GUTKNECHT

*"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 40:3-5.*

**W**HEN the time was fulfilled, God sent His Son into a world suffering with sin and distress. But before the Saviour of the world commenced His work of redemption, God sent a preparer of the way—John the Baptist. For the King of glory the way to the hearts of the people who sat in the shadows of death was made free and straight through the powerful call of repentance of a simple preacher in the wilderness. All high things were to be brought low, and all low things were to be elevated. The messenger well knew the time, and the message did not fail in its purpose.

Jesus came as He was promised. After He was anointed, He began His ministry, revealed His divine commission, sealed His divine message with signs and wonders, and paid the price for our sins by suffering and dying. Everyone who accepts Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, acknowledges His sacrifice as rendered for himself, and follows the Lamb in humility and obedience will reach the goal of eternal life.

We are living today in the time of the second Advent. Jesus will come again, according to His promise. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3. Furthermore, the heavenly messengers said to the grieving disciples at Jesus' ascension, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this

same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

But Christ Jesus, the Son of God, will not come the second time as a helpless babe or a Man of Sorrows, but as King of kings and Lord of lords in great power and glory.

The coming of Christ must be prepared for. The way must be made straight for the King of glory. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Isaiah 40:9, 10. "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself." Psalm 50:1-6.

God is looking for preparers of the way! He wants to send His servants with the comfort of divine truth into the comfortless reality of this world, which can only be compared to a wilderness. It is right now, on the eve of this world's history, that the Lord places the question before His followers, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah 6:8. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3. This is our commission. This is the duty of the Advent people. Through a worldwide call to repentance, the way into the hearts of men must be prepared for the Lord. The loftiness of human pride, self-conceit, and arrogance

must be lowered through the solemn message, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come. . . ." The valleys of hopelessness, loneliness, and guilt must be lifted up through the message of hope, love, forgiveness, and mercy.

Before we can go to work, however, we must first examine ourselves personally to see if we are ready to be Christ's co-workers. God needs men who have hearts, men who have experienced a conversion and regeneration.

God needs young people to carry His word forward quickly. He is seeking young men and women as preparers of the way. The Spirit of prophecy says: "O that young men might appreciate the high destiny to which they are called! Ponder well the paths of your feet. Begin your work with high and holy purpose, and be determined that through the power of the grace of God, you will not diverge from the path of rectitude. If you begin to go in a wrong direction, every step will be fraught with peril and disaster, and you will go on straying from the path of truth, safety, and success. You need your intellect strengthened, your moral energies quickened, by divine power.

"The cause of God demands the highest powers of the being, and there is urgent need in many fields for young men of literary qualifications. There is need of men who can be trusted to labor in extensive fields that are now white to the harvest. Young men of ordinary ability, who give themselves wholly to God, who are uncorrupted by vice and impurity, will be successful, and will be enabled to do a great work for God. Let young men heed the admonition, and be sober-minded.

"How many youth have wasted their God-given strength in folly and dissipation! How many painful histories rise before me of youth who have become mere wrecks of humanity, mentally, morally, physically, because of indulgence in vicious habits! Their constitutions are ruined, their life usefulness greatly im-



paired, because of indulgence in unlawful pleasures.

"I intreat of you, careless, wreckless youth of today, be converted, and become laborers together with God. Let it be the study of your life to bless and save others. If you seek help from God, His power working in you will bring to naught all opposing powers, and you will become sanctified through the truth. Sin is alarmingly prevalent among the youth of today, but let it be your purpose to do what you can to rescue souls from the power of Satan." —*Messages to Young People*, pp. 22, 23.

Our youth can be a light and the salt of the earth everywhere, in the universities and the high schools. Especially there the salt of a God-fearing, godly life can slow down the rottenness of moral decay among the present youth. In one's profession, in society, everywhere we may shine as a light when Christ has entered into our life. A further quotation says: "Carry light wherever you go; show that you have strength of purpose, that you are not a person of indecision, easily swayed by the persuasions of evil associates. Do not yield a ready assent to the suggestions of those who dishonor God, but rather seek to reform, reclaim, and rescue souls from evil.

"Resort to prayer, persuade in meekness and lowliness of spirit those who oppose themselves. One soul saved from error, and brought under the banner of Christ, will cause joy in heaven, and place a star in your crown of rejoicing. A soul saved will, through his godly influence, bring other souls to a knowledge of salvation, and thus the work will multiply, and only the revealings of the day of judgment will make manifest the extent of the work.

"Do not hesitate to work for the Lord because you think you can do but little. Do your little with fidelity; for God will work with your efforts. He will write your name in the book of life as one worthy to enter into the joy of the Lord. Let us earnestly entreat the Lord that laborers may be raised up, for the fields are white to the harvest; the harvest is great, and laborers are few. . . ." —*Messages to Young People*, p. 23.

### Every valley will be exalted

This is a good comparison which concerns all those who live in the valley of despondency. How often we are dejected when we should confess Jesus and His truth. How often we lack faith when we are to undertake something for God and the lost. O how many excuses we have, but the Bible gives examples of those who overcame and became a great blessing. Come out of the valley of worries, lamentation, doubt, and despondency, and rise upward to the mountain of

faith, hope, thankfulness, and joy in the Lord. From this point we will view the large field of cooperation with God for the salvation of men. On the heights of faith, all egotistical thinking and acting will cease and we will receive a large heart for the needy, the distressed, the hopeless, and the despairing ones.

Not unlike the patriarchs and prophets, apostles and reformers, we, as the last people of God, should teach obedience to the Ten Commandments and point to the Lamb of God as our only righteousness. Therefore, courage in the Lord!

"Never let your courage fail. Never talk unbelief because appearances are against you. As you work for the Master you will feel pressure for want of means, but the Lord will hear and answer your petitions for help. Let your language be: 'The Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.' Isaiah 50:7." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 244.

"If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ—the yoke of obedience and service—all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved." —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 101.

### Every mountain and hill shall be brought low

How easily men become proud and arrogant. A preparer of the way of God should never have this said of him. His example is the meek and lowly Saviour. "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5. Preparers of the way of the great King must come down from the height of pride and conceit and, in prayer, disappear from sight. The greatest victories are won in the waiting room with God, when men implore the help of the Almighty in prayer. Prayer is the most important preparation and the most powerful weapon. Pray from house to house and from heart to heart. The deeper we descend into humility, the greater will be our success. The experience of David, ". . . If Thou humblest me, Thou makest me great" (2 Samuel 22:36, Lutheran translation), may become the experience of us all.

### And the rough places shall be made plain

This is a good comparison for human stubbornness, headiness, dissatisfaction, murmuring, and unthankfulness. Our

selfish will and egotism are the things that stand in the way of the will of God. Self is spiteful against God; it creates barriers and hinders the work!

Preparers of the way who allow self to intervene are accomplishing exactly the opposite of their commission. They are creating rough places and unevenness. All who would like to prepare the way of the Lord should pray, "Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 159.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord," is an appeal of God to His people—to His servants. But the preparers of the way of God must be free, or become free, from the old mind of discouragement, pride, double-talk, egotism, and covetousness.

If we accept the counsel of the apostle Paul, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5), then we are true co-workers and preparers of the way of the Lord. May the Lord help us in this.

*THE REFORMER*, supplement to *The Sabbath Watchman*, presents news and articles of special interest to members and friends of the International Missionary Society of Seventh-day Adventists, Reform Movement, American Union. It proclaims the straight truth and elevates the standard of the three angels' messages (Revelation 14:6-12).

World War I saw responsible men of the Seventh-day Adventist Church publicly declaring it to be the duty of all Adventist men to defend their respective countries with weapons in hand, even on the Sabbath. Hundreds of staunch believers protested this stand, but their protest was not heeded and they were disfellowshipped against their wishes. All attempts to reunite on the old platform of truth have failed. This was the birth of the Reform Movement, which today is represented in all major countries.

#### FOREIGN OFFICES

*Australia*: 121 Toongabbie Road, Toongabbie, N.S.W. 2146

*Canada*: P.O. Box 401, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3H8

*England*: 8 Garden House Lane, Tingley, Wakefield, Yorkshire WF3 1NW

*Philippines*: Box 31, Legaspi City

*South Africa*: P.O. Box 76, Broedersroom 0240

*Other offices*: Argentina, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, El Salvador, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Holland, Honduras, Italy, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Peru, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia



# Continue in Prayer

By W. EGERTER

*"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Colossians 4:2.*

**N**O person must pray; he may pray; he may enter into a reality beyond this earth, into the 'audience chamber of God,' into the heavenly sanctuary. He may enter without knocking or waiting to hear the words, 'Come in!' We can come to God just as we are, laden with grief, worries, and pain, but also with much joy. That which makes us uneasy and depresses us we may at such moments forget; it should not disturb us. And then we may tell Him what ails us, on what we made shipwreck, why we have failed, why we feel guilty, and that we feel sorry. Once we have relieved ourselves of this burden, a deep, never-thought-of peace will come over us. In the measure with which we free our hearts from it, Jesus Christ enters in and we experience His forgiveness. Then our hearts are relieved, yet this is not just emotion. We shall not be confused by thoughts of doubt, for God has surely taken the burden from us. The world around us has grown brighter and friendlier again. God is near us. This knowledge lifts us over the darkest hours." —*Heute noch beten? (Still Praying Today?)*, p. 92.

It is remarkable that so much is written in God's word about prayer. And the Bible is also full of wonderful answers to prayer. Men and women are shown to us, old and young, who have presented their requests to God for divine action and intervention, for His help, for His protection, and for wisdom. Remember Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Hezekiah, Elijah, Daniel, Peter, and Paul, as well as the women, Rachel, Leah, Hannah, and Mary. As they did, so we also know that we must request everything from our heavenly Father. Does not the songwriter say so beautifully,

*"With grief and worry often,  
And with much self-wrought pain,  
There's nothing He will give us  
Unless we pray again?"*

The experiences of all the Bible men and women show us that the greatest victories were gained by incessant prayer in the audience chamber of God. The sincere, importunate prayer of an earnest, truly God-fearing man can move the arm of God. The uplifted hands of Moses were stronger than the weapons of the warlike Amalekites. When Elijah prayed to the Lord, fire fell from heaven upon the

altar. The longed-for rain came when he bowed his knees before the Most High on the summit of Carmel. Peter was freed from prison when the whole church moved the arm of the Most High in persevering prayer and an angel was sent for his deliverance. The meetings for prayer of the first Christian churches were blessed prayer meetings in which God revealed Himself. Prison gates were opened by prayer. Inward and outward growth, patience in suffering, steadfastness in persecution, preservation from many dangers were the fruits of the silent and public prayers of the churches.

Jacob prayed and wrestled all night with God for forgiveness. Elisha prayed for the dead lad until he returned to life (2 Kings 4:33-35). Daniel prayed for knowledge of the mysteries of God. Yes, our Lord prayed whole nights long to His Father.

The Spirit of prophecy gives us the following counsel: "Go to your closet, and there alone plead with God: . . . Be in earnest, be sincere. Fervent prayer availeth much. Jacoblike, wrestle in prayer. Agonize. Jesus, in the garden, sweat great drops of blood; you must make an effort. Do not leave your closet until you feel strong in God; . . ." —*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 51.

Our life should witness to a steady connection with God. "We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks." —*Steps to Christ*, p. 103.

"If you expect salvation, you must pray. Take time. Be not hurried and careless in your prayers. Beg of God to work in you a thorough reformation, that the fruits of His Spirit may dwell in you, . . .

"But we can no more live a religious life without constant prayer . . . than we can have physical strength without partaking of temporal food." —*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, pp. 52, 580. As early as 1886, Sister White wrote about the meaning of prayer. She said that it is the opening of our heart to the Father, the acknowledgment of our entire dependence, the expression of our needs, the homage of thankful love—this means true prayer. And the prayer rising from the heart, the asking and the thanksgiving, penetrate to the heart of God. Daily communion with our heavenly Father exerts a positive influence upon our whole being. It benefits the health of soul and body. It imparts to us inner rest and content-

ment. Many things are changed by our prayers—most of all, ourselves and our relationship to our neighbors and our surrounding world. "It is not the active ones but the praying ones who will change the world," R. Schneider once wrote.

And Martin Luther said, "To talk with Him is prayer; it is a great glory that the high Majesty of heaven so condescends to us poor, little worms that we may open our mouths and He will gladly listen. But it is more glorious and precious that He speaks to us and we can listen to Him. His talking is much more precious than ours."

Yes, we must admit that prayer has not always been appreciated. When we study the testimonies which talk so earnestly about prayer and when we look deeper into the great and wonderful experiences of men and women, we can come to no other conclusion but that we must pray more and experience the power of true prayer. Then we shall also cling to prayer in deep reverence and faith and understand what the apostle Paul meant when he said, "Continue in prayer." How many disappointments and failures we could save ourselves if we would only pray more! Someone said, "True, prayer is not everything, but without prayer everything else is nothing." If we consult with God concerning all our needs, we shall make the most wonderful experiences. But materialistic thinking crowds out prayer and the need for it. O that this undertow might not keep us from our daily communion with God. The Psalmist wrote, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psalm 55:22.

Yes, the Lord will not only hear us but also answer us. How many believers have made this experience! The childless Hannah prayed so fervently and incessantly in the house of God for a son that Eli the priest thought she was intoxicated. Yet Hannah convinced Eli of the sincerity of her request, so that he sent her home with the promise of the divine blessing. When the son petitioned from God was born, she called him "Samuel," meaning "an answer from God."

God always answers, but often in a manner different from our expectations. Therefore, we must learn to understand God's answers. Prayer is wrestling for an answer. For the most part, we pray to comply with a form, but how will we ever know that God both hears our prayers and answers them if we do not pray for a specific thing? Only when we pray to the Father for something specific and then wait for an answer will we see how He hears our prayers and answers them.

Martin Luther once said: "We have an advantage in that our prayer is always answered; even though it may not happen



to be in accordance with our will, yet God's will is done, which is better than ours. . . . But God knows how to answer us. If He always fulfilled our exact wishes, He would be our prisoner. . . . This one thing I know: As often as I have prayed in earnest, and it has been prayed in real earnestness, I have been surely and more richly answered and have received more than I desired. Our Lord God has at times delayed, yet He has nevertheless always answered."

Dear brethren and sisters, It is time for us to be in earnest in our prayers, even if we do not always get an immediate answer. I read the following inspirational thoughts recently and want to share them with you: "For the most part God says 'YES.' I prayed for the remission of my guilt, and He said, 'YES.' I prayed for health, and He gave it to me. I prayed for my daily bread, and He gave it in abundance. I prayed for help in my vocation, and He said 'YES.' I prayed for a human being, and He gave him to me. I asked, asked, and asked, and He provided so much in His mercy and in abundance.

"Yet I caught myself not seeing the many 'YES' answers anymore. And I fear that it is the same with many others who come to think that God is silent. Oh, the unthankfulness! God says 'YES,' and you do not hear it because you close your ears and in a deaf way cry out, 'God is silent!' And yet He said, 'YES.'"

"At times God delays His answer and says, 'WAIT!' Why? He knows our peculiarity, that we forget and are selfish. If He would give immediately, we would also quit praying immediately. And yet He wants to have communion with us. And this is what prayer is—communion with the Friend and Father. So we must spend a while longer with Him in communion before He will give to us. Often He will give right away if we do not neglect our communion with Him. Surely God has many reasons for saying, 'WAIT.' I shall mention only one. Many people are lazy; they think God is supposed to do what they can do themselves. So God gives them time to get rid of the problem themselves. He lets us solve our own tasks, but He helps us and strengthens us when we, indeed, can go no further. So God says, 'WAIT!' so we may have time to get rid of our problems ourselves. This is because He wants to make established, mature people out of us.

"Furthermore, God sometimes hides His 'YES' behind the answer of 'DIFFERENT.' It's different than we had anticipated, different than what we had wished for, different from what we thought we wanted. This 'DIFFERENT' we must also understand as an answer of God to our petitions.

"But now we come to the borderline. Here God's 'NO' turns into a sad 'I

cannot.' God also says 'NO' at times. He always does it when we pray selfishly, for He Himself set the priorities for our aspirations—"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." If you reverse this direction, God will say, 'NO!' If you continue and remain in the wrong channel of life, God says 'NO' and keeps silent. God keeps mum? Yes, God keeps quiet. Many more reasons make God say 'NO.' You pray to Him for a blessing, but you sink down in worry. God has said 'NO.' Really? He has promised blessings in abundance, and He gives them. But what next? 'Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . [then] I will . . . open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing.' This is what He promised. Give to Him what belongs to Him!

"You are clinging to the promise, 'And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.' Yet the trouble does not move away; it only gets darker and darker. Any kind of trouble becomes more and more unsolvable and hopeless. God is silent? Yes! Have you fulfilled the promise you made, the baptismal vow or some other personal vow? Have you paid your due in sacrificial thankfulness?"

Now let us examine ourselves. Viewing these different answers of God—"Yes! Wait! Different! and No!"—in our individual lives helps us to understand and acknowledge the treatment of God and our neglects. We will recognize why God has given us a different answer than we expected.

There is imbedded in the calm attitude and in waiting for an answer and the fulfillment of God a test of patience which every sincere, believing, praying one has to undergo. And even though the test of endurance may not always lead the praying one to his desired goal in prayer, yet it makes us humble and expectant in the thought, Wherever God leads me, I will go, not directing my own way. Let us "hold fast to His leadings." After all, most important is the will of God, not that of the suppliant. What God finds is suited for us is for our good. Whether or not we pray according "to His will" shows the condition of our heart and also of our experience. To fit oneself into the providence and will of God is the greatest duty of life. No matter how things turn out, we are to be thankful individually, for hindsight will show the beauty of God's leading when we submit to His leading. ". . . And watch in the same with thanksgiving." We have all kinds of reasons for thankfulness! Is it not wonderful that we may know the truth—the plan of redemption, the sacrifice on Calvary, and Jesus, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life"? Is it not glorious that God is reserving for us an eternal inheritance and that He will

make us worthy to receive this inheritance? We may be thankful in the knowledge that one day all suffering will end, that all tears will be wiped away, and all grief and pain will be ended. The Lord has also freed us from the power of Satan. Yes, in spite of all our backslidings, God has given us the assurance again and again of redemption and the forgiveness of our sins. Let us thank Him for this with our whole heart!

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:12-14.

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers." 1 Thessalonians 1:2.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most High: To shew forth Thy lovingkindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night." Psalm 92:1, 2.

". . . In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Philippians 4:6.

Thus instead of saying, "Continue in prayer," I say, "Continue to give thanks," for thankfulness is the prayer of a joyful heart.

Prayer is the "breath of the soul." Breathing continually renews our body. We eat three times a day, but we breathe constantly day and night. Just as we cannot breathe just once in the morning to last us until noon, so we cannot pray shortly just in the morning to supply us until lunchtime. Therefore, "Pray without ceasing," and "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

"Pray in your closet, and as you go about your daily labor let your heart be often uplifted to God. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. These silent prayers rise like precious incense before the throne of grace. Satan cannot overcome him whose heart is thus stayed upon God.

"There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. There is nothing that can prevent us from lifting up our hearts in the spirit of earnest prayer. In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before King Artaxerxes. A closet of communion may be found wherever we are. We should have the door of the heart open continually and our invitation going up that Jesus may come and abide as a heavenly guest in the soul." —*Steps to Christ*, pp. 98, 99.



# the Giver

expects a "living" sacrifice—in other words, a pure, healthy, energetic, joyful person totally committed to Christ. He doesn't want a body polluted with alcohol, drugs, or harmful foods. He wants us to use our God-given intelligence and to take care of our bodies as carefully as we can so we may feel well, think clearly, and be able to work effectively for Christ. There's no place for dopey, lazy, careless, unclean people in the army of the Lord! Only those who truly represent the King will be used in His service.

There's more that we can give—namely, our time! Time is a talent equally apportioned to all mankind. The wise use of it will determine our eternal destiny. How much time do you devote to God each day—15 or 20 minutes, perhaps? How much time in a week—only a few hours? How much time do you spend in earnest prayer? Do you take time out of your busy schedule to write a few words of encouragement to a sick or bereaved friend? Do you cheerfully accept the challenge of teaching a Sabbath School lesson or children's class (it takes time to prepare to teach them)? Are you willing to spare the time to write an article for this magazine or some lessons for our children? Or are you "too busy"? "Too busy" often means in reality, "I don't want to!" Think about it!

## Tithes and offerings

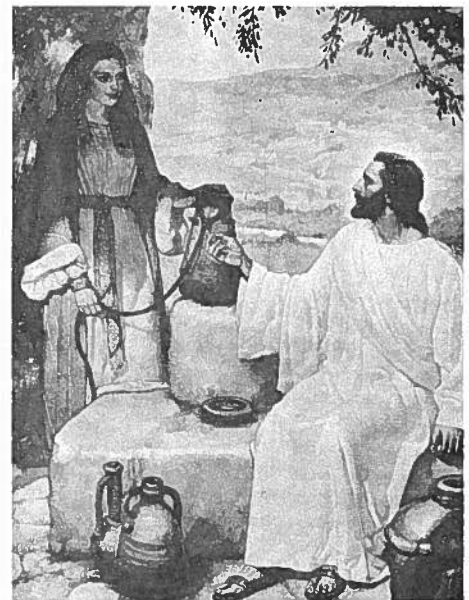
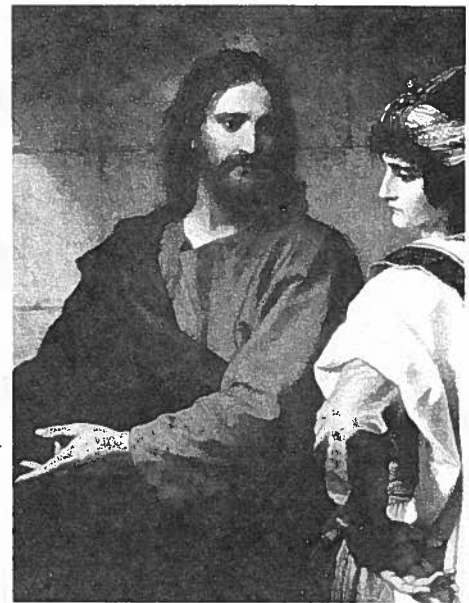
A vital area of Christian giving is related to money. Are you returning to the Lord His own in tithes and offerings regularly and faithfully? Here's an area where unselfish giving is promptly rewarded by abundant blessings! "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings." "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if

I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:8, 10. "Give, and it shall be given you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38.

There is more we can and should give freely—our talents. God gave them to us to improve and use wisely in His service. Music, art, a friendly smile, kindness, joy, creativity, speech, sewing, woodworking—the list is endless. Are you using your talents merely to make a living, to amass a fortune, or to serve God and your fellowmen?

Willing service for the Master is one of the most outstanding things we can give. Personal, unselfish witnessing is a powerful influence for good. Who can measure it? Christ lived to give. Can we afford to do less? I am ashamed to hear professed Christians declare that they have no time to go once a month for two hours distributing Christian literature from door to door! My heart is pained to see church officers neglect their duties and church members fail to do their part in keeping the sanctuary and its grounds neat, clean, and representative of a holy God! Are we truly giving or are we just coming to church to receive something?

Let all who take the name of Christ awake and examine their true condition. Are we spiritual sponges, absorbing, taking in, grabbing for ourselves with no thought of giving out to others? If so, we are like stagnant pools—impure, distasteful, ugly, unfit vessels for living waters. May God help us to appreciate the gracious gifts of Christ, the Giver, and give ourselves unreservedly to Him in heartfelt, loving service to all within our sphere of influence. "... God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7.



*"Take my life, and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;  
Take my hands, and let them move  
At the impulse of Thy love.  
Take my feet, and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for Thee;  
Take my voice, and let me sing  
Always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips, and let them be  
Filled with messages from Thee;  
Take my silver and my gold;  
Not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my will and make it Thine;  
It shall be no longer mine;  
Take my heart, it is Thine own!  
It shall be Thy royal throne.  
Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
At Thy feet its treasure store;  
Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee."*



# Beware the Pharisee!

By DANE THOMAS



**I**MAGINE it is 2,000 years ago in the city of Jerusalem. From our vantage point in the marketplace as a part of the pushing and browsing masses, we see two distinctly different individuals approaching from two different directions, making their way to the great temple of Solomon. It was much more common in those days for people to worship frequently during the day as they passed on their way to or from work or shopping.

On this particular day, ours are not the only eyes to follow these men up the great steps and into the awesome darkness of the temple. Jesus of Nazareth, still a youth, still preparing for His great earthly mission, silently observes, as we do, the gross differences of these two men. His eyes, and indeed His whole being, saddens as the scene unfolds. Years later, this event would provide a vitally important parable for His disciples and, indeed, a graphic example for the entire world.

Surely these two men feel no differently now than they have ever before (perhaps no differently than you or I do when we go to church every week). As they enter the temple, one of them is clearly a Pharisee, a member of the Hebrew clergy. The other man is a layman. As a matter of fact, we recognize from the layman's garb and actions that

he is a well-known tax gatherer, whom we have seen many times before.

With strong strides, the Pharisee boldly approaches the altar. He stands upright, full of self-praise, giving an air of superiority that is reflected in his looks, his facial expression, the way he walks and expresses himself, the way he chooses his words in prayer. Rich in temporal goods (and supposedly spiritual goods, too), he feels no need in either category.

Why does he come to God, then? Doesn't he regard himself as a sinner seeking pardon? No. He sees himself, rather, as righteous and hopes to win commendation. He regards his worship and example as an act of merit that recommends him to God. At the same time, his actions will give those around him a high opinion of his piety. This worship, prompted by self-interest, aimed at impressing both his fellowman and his God, ends up impressing only himself.

"God," he begins, his voice ringing loud and clear through the temple, "I thank Thee that I am not . . ." and here he pauses for a moment, eying the publican behind him, and then continues, "as other men are: . . . extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican."

The Pharisee looks pityingly at the lowly tax collector, judging his character just as all sinful men, full of pride, judge one another. How glad we should be that we are privileged to have a just, sinless God to judge us—and judge us accurately—not someone who forms opinions by what someone wears or how much money he makes, or how lacking his character is when compared with one's own!

The Pharisee, in his mind, by looking upon the publican has taken his eyes off God and turned them to humanity. In secret contempt and self-satisfaction, he begins to enumerate his own good deeds.

"I fast twice in the week, I give tithe of all that I possess,"



he boasts, trying to convince himself and all those around him of his obvious superiority. Although most of us are not this blatant in our approach to a situation like this, it is conceivable, nevertheless, that we get awfully smug and self-satisfied sometimes when we compare ourselves spiritually with others. As the Pharisee, when we become judgmental, our character is not being touched by God, nor are we allowing Him to work in us. In short, we are bartering God-likeness, love, and mercy for a mere outward semblance. Even William Shakespeare, the very famous and very worldly playwright, described this sort of man: "full of sound and fury, yet signifying nothing."

Behind the Pharisee, our lowly publican, who has drawn apart from the other worshipers because he has felt unworthy to unite with them in their devotions, does not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but smites his chest in bitter anguish and self-aborrence. He feels that he has transgressed God's law, that he is sinful and polluted. He cannot expect any pity from those around him, because they look upon him with contempt. Tragically, this poor man knows he has nothing at all with which to commend himself to God. So in utter despair, with heart broken and overflowing with contrition, he cries, "God, be merciful . . . to me . . . a sinner."

He does not compare himself to others. He is, rather, overwhelmed with a sense of guilt and grief. Standing as if alone before God, he expresses his desire for pardon, peace, and mercy. And he is blessed. Later, Christ would recall this to His disciples and say, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other."

Did God, therefore, deprive the Pharisee of his blessing? No, the Pharisee, by his formalism and lack of true godliness, deprived himself of any blessing he may have come for. His

righteousness was his own, not Christ's, and so the fruits of his work are judged by a human standard as well. It seems almost an iron-clad rule, doesn't it? He who trusts in himself, that he is righteous, will despise others. Soon he begins to accuse. This is the first sin Satan manifested outwardly, and it is an earmark of every one of his followers. We must behold Christ, because it is ignorance of Him that makes men so uplift their own righteousness.

"The prayer of the publican was heard because it showed dependence reaching forth to lay hold upon Omnipotence. . . .

"No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul.

"It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. . . . There needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. . . .

"Those whom heaven recognizes as holy ones are the last to parade their own goodness."  
—Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 159, 160.

We all must beware of slipping "over the edge" into the pit of pharisaism. We stand warned of what it is and how we may avoid it in our own lives. Constant, earnest prayer for both ourselves and others will help us escape this deadly self-destruction.





**T**HE holidays are coming! The time to forget one's diet, hide the scales, get out the roomiest clothes you can still look decent in, and give way to your desire to eat, eat, eat.

Only to awaken to a headache, the most upset stomach you've yet experienced, the realization that those roomiest clothes are now the only ones you can get into, and a genuine disgust for yourself that you've "done it again."

The "power of the plate" truly is one of mankind's (and womankind's) greatest temptations. Eve succumbed to her desire to taste the forbidden fruit. "How lovely and fresh looking it was!"<sup>1</sup> she told her husband. Esau despised his birthright for a bowl of mouth-watering lentil soup. The children of Israel, tired of the sameness of their temporary, miraculously heaven-sent manna, demanded a return to the great variety of their diet as slaves. "Oh, for a few bites of meat! Oh, that we had some of the delicious fish we enjoyed so much in Egypt, and the wonderful cucumbers and melons, leeks, onions, and garlic! But now our strength is gone, and day after day we have to face this manna!"<sup>2</sup>

Overeating is a problem for me, too. And many, many others I know. One young woman describes it this way: "When I walk by a plate of cookies, why, they just about jump into my mouth!"

We as Christians know that our appetites for eating too much and for eating the wrong kinds of food can be overcome, for the Lord Himself assures us, "Anything is possible if you have faith."<sup>3</sup> "When the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of fruit in us: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."<sup>4</sup> Note that self-control is the last virtue mentioned here, possibly because it is the most difficult to acquire! So let's consider some ways to help control our errant appetite—not just at holiday time but all year around.

## The Power of the Plate



### Two meals a day—try it!

You don't think you can possibly get by with only breakfast and lunch? Again I say, try it! There's no point in trying it for only a day or two, though. Give it a fair trial—two weeks at least. And do it with these thoughts in mind.

"Eat a substantial breakfast. It is the custom and order of society to take a slight breakfast. But this is not the best way to treat the stomach. At breakfast time the stomach is in a better condition to take care of more food than at the second or third meal of the day. The habit of eating a sparing breakfast and a large dinner is wrong. Make your breakfast correspond more nearly to the heartiest meal of the day."<sup>5</sup> Does this mean to eat a double portion of cereal, two slices of toast and twice your usual amount of apple slices or orange sections? I hope not. But do make sure your first meal of the day is a hearty one, high in protein, vitamins, and minerals.

Try one of the many varieties of surprise waffles in *The Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Cookbook* (by Edith Young Cottrell, Woodbridge Press, Santa Barbara, California), available at most health food stores. I call them surprise waffles, because I'm amazed that anyone ever thought of making soybeans and

oats, pinto beans and wheat, cornmeal and cashews, or peanuts and oats into waffles! But I'm so glad they did, and that each one of the waffles is equivalent in protein value to two eggs. The tasty squares can be topped with peanut butter, a dab of honey, and some sliced bananas; or spread with peanut butter and then smothered in hot unsweetened applesauce or with cooked, mashed pears to melt the peanut butter, or with margarine and a thick covering of cooked, pitted prunes. Interested? Good.

You may also try having your usual dinner at breakfast time. Some say they cannot face the day without beginning with a fruit meal. All right. But it wouldn't hurt to try baked potatoes, a tasty nutmeat entree, and crisp salad first thing in the morning—once in a while at least.

There are, of course, difficulties in adopting this two-meal plan. Your husband and children may refuse to join you in it. Or you may be able to persuade your children to keep you company, but your husband's work hours make it all but impossible for him to do it. In those cases, it may help to give him as hearty a breakfast and lunch as he will eat and then to serve him something for his third meal that you have already had during one of your two meals. It's far less tempt-



ing for you to smell mashed potatoes for the second time than to try to resist sampling something you haven't eaten for a month.

Another difficulty is that you might feel that you have only two tries to consume all that you used to eat in three meals. But being overweight is proof—isn't it?—that you usually eat too much. And, believe me, you may think you're going to starve at first, but you'll be surprised at how much better you may begin to feel. "Those who are changing from three meals a day, to two, will at first be troubled more or less with faintness, especially about the time they have been in the habit of eating their third meal. But if they persevere for a short time, this faintness will disappear. . . . The stomach may be so educated as to desire food eight times a day, and feel faint if it is not supplied. But this is no argument in favor of so frequent eating."<sup>6</sup>

"The practice of eating but two meals a day is generally found a benefit to health; yet under some circumstances, persons may require a third meal. This should, however, if taken at all, be very light, and of food most easily digested. Crackers—the English biscuit—or zwieback, and fruit, or cereal coffee, are the foods best suited for the evening meal."<sup>7</sup>

#### **Serve only three or four foods at a meal**

From experience you'll probably agree that you are much less likely to overeat at a simple meal of salad, main dish, and one or two vegetables than at a potluck at which you can't resist trying "just a bite" of everything. Cooking a smaller variety of foods also leaves the hostess with more energy to enjoy visiting with her guests or family.

#### **Habits to change**

Custom decrees that everyone is to stay at the table until he who eats the most or the longest has taken his last bite. It is hard to resist

keeping that slow eater company, right? So, society notwithstanding, excuse yourself, brush your teeth, and get on with other activities.

If you find yourself sampling the leftovers as you leisurely clean off the table, by all means assign that job to a slimmer sister or daughter Jane and get busy clearing and rinsing the plates.

#### **Desserts—sinfully delicious?**

They needn't be. Not if they're a part of the meal, placed on the table with all the other food. Not if they contribute to its health-giving nutrition. Slightly sweetened apple pie for breakfast, for instance, after fresh fruit and cereal topped with milk and chopped nuts. Or carrot pie dolloped with cashew cream (recipes follow) after a vegetable dinner as the first or second meal of the day. Pitted dates can be stuffed with filberts, walnuts, peanuts, cashews, brazils, or other nuts (but please don't roll the dates in powdered sugar) and served with any meal.

Above all, don't keep forbidden sweets around the house. If your husband eats them once in a while, beg him to keep his hoard at the office. Give your fledgling habit of self-control a chance to strengthen by, at first at least, preventing its sudden collapse.

#### **You who are not tempted by appetite . . .**

Please don't urge anyone to eat more! A skinny, growing child? All right. But a plump or well-proportioned adult—never. Let them be the masters of their own nutritional program and resolve. Never tempt them with too great a variety at any meal, with empty-caloried food, with urging to empty the bowl or by implying that they must not have liked what you prepared. Encourage guests and family to eat for health only.

#### **Put the brakes on**

Wise Solomon, who unfortunately gained some of his wisdom from experience instead of thinking things

through, warned us who are prone to overeat: "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite."<sup>8</sup> Let's put the brakes on and learn to relish what's good for us!

#### **QUICK PIE CRUST**

1½ cups oats  
½ cup oil  
½ cup rye flour  
½ tsp. salt  
2 tbs. sesame seeds, unhulled  
¼ cup water  
½ cup whole wheat flour

Mix all ingredients well and press into a pie plate

#### **CARROT PIE**

2½ tbs. arrowroot powder or cornstarch  
1¼ cups carrots, cooked and chopped  
¾ cup or less pitted dates  
1½ cups milk or water  
3 tbs. oil  
¾ tsp. salt  
3 tbs. soya flour  
1 tsp. vanilla

Whiz all ingredients in a blender. Pour into a pan lined with Quick Pie crust. Bake at 350 degrees F., or until set—about 35 minutes. Top with any whipped topping, such as Cashew Cream.

#### **CASHEW CREAM**

½ cup broken cashews (they cost less than whole ones)  
½ cup water, or enough to get it and the cashews to become creamy in the blender  
Flavor with honey and vanilla

1. Genesis 3:6, *The Living Bible*.
2. Numbers 11:4-6, *The Living Bible*.
3. Mark 9:23, *The Living Bible*.
4. Galatians 5:22, 23, *The Living Bible*.
5. Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, section 268.
6. *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, sections 270, 271.
7. *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, section 273.
8. Proverbs 23:2, *The King James Bible*.

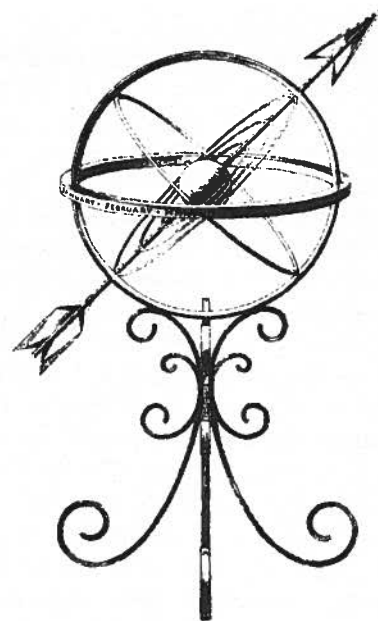




# CURRENT SPHERE

By BARBARA WATTS

## *Spiritualizing the World*



Elements are at work in the religious world at almost a feverish pitch; their goal is to spread the word—their own individualized message. Evangelization is the big word and the big method—and it was even part of the style of the recent political campaigns.

Each of the organizations has stated its purpose as the evangelization of the world or the spreading of its creed worldwide. Here's just a sampling:

The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International launched a campaign a year ago which its leaders claimed would reach the whole world, through radio, their small printed magazine, and the work of the members.

In August, the 41st International Eucharistic Congress convened in Philadelphia, the first held in the U.S. in 50 years. Open to all faiths, the talks involved Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and United Methodists, who reached a consensus on the communion service that it conveys Christ's "real presence" and represents His sacrifice on the cross. The churchmen said theologians in various denominations now find no basic differences in the beliefs of the denominations involved in the talks. The dignitaries attending included President Ford, Prince Ranier and Princess Grace of Monaco, Mother Teresa of India, and a personal representative of Pope Paul VI.

Sun Myung Moon, the Korean who has so upset parents of young people who have left home to join his Unification Church, will be carrying his creed to Europe. Some sociologists believe that as many as 20 million Americans may be involved in the "fringe religious cults such as Scientology, Hare Krishna, the Unification Church, and some black gospel groups." University of Chicago anthropologist Irving Zaretsky, who recently completed a 10-year study of fringe religious groups, states, "The number may be

much larger, and it includes a great many respectable, middle class, and upper class people who may also belong to traditional religious groups."

Meanwhile, on the Protestant evangelical side, Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ International, is celebrating the organization's 25th anniversary by developing strategy to help evangelize the entire world. His "Here's Life" campaign, which you may have noticed in the bumper sticker carried on so many cars, "I found it!" has been launched in the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, as well as the United States. He claims to have a staff now of over 5,000 people in over 80 countries and to have the potential opportunity to train 70,000 Chinese. Bright sees the U.S. as in grave trouble economically, politically, morally, and spiritually. His goal is to have America "disciplined and evangelized" by January 1977 but then cushions his expectations by saying the attainment of his goal will be measured as follows: "Among other things, Jesus Christ should be the topic of interest and concern in the communities of America more than He was at the start of the year. Saturation of the nation is a continuing thing. It does not end in December of 1976. It will accelerate in 1977, and in 1978, and in 1980, because nothing is more exciting than leading another person to Christ and helping him grow and lead others to Christ." But when a reporter mentioned that the Bible "seems to teach that at the end of the age the world situation will get worse, and love among Christians will grow cold," implying that the "great awakening" Bright is predicting doesn't seem to coincide with the Biblical prophecy, the Campus Crusade leader conveniently turned the Scriptural prediction to his own advantage: "I do not personally believe that the Lord's return is imminent. I think the current teaching that it is imminent is leading many,

many Christians to fold their hands and disobey what Jesus said to do. Jesus said we should work, for the night is coming when no man can work." He seems to deny the fact that belief in Jesus' soon return is the greatest stimulator to the gospel work that there is!

But there is still more intense work being done. The National Prayer Congress, which took place October 26-29, in Dallas, Texas, encompassed national figures such as the above Mr. Bright, Billy Graham, Pat Boone, Corrie ten Boom, and Charles Colson. Their advertisement for the Congress read, "Come pray with us for a spiritual awakening to sweep America. . . . We must, once again, turn to God in repentance and prayer for our nation. Like ancient Judah during the reign of King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20), America is faced with seemingly insurmountable problems from within and without. God's promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14 to heal the spiritual and moral wounds of this country awaits our action."

On the Catholic side, after many years of upheaval, the younger Catholic clergy are coming down to the people's level to the point where Bishop James Rausch, General Secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference, feels that the church is entering "a time of healing." *Time* magazine, in a decidedly pro-Catholic analysis stated in its May 24, 1976, issue: "Catholics as a people are displaying a remarkable tenacity these days, a kind of spiritual second wind that suggests that U.S. Catholicism might even be on the verge of a new period of vigor."

"The most unusual of these vital signs is the Catholic Charismatic movement, which has grown from a handful of people nine years ago to a huge following now of more than 600,000 adherents across the country. The 'gifts of the spirit' that



these Charismatics cherish, such as speaking in tongues and healing, together with a heavy authoritarianism in some of their communities, alienate some fellow Catholics. But the Charismatics have some warm advocates among U.S. bishops.

"Other prayer and Bible-study groups are springing up by the thousands across the country, and there are signs of a religious revival on campus."

And although most of them, for the sake of drawing the largest possible numbers and greatest possible profit, disavow that they are religious, the mind control schemes are doing their own evangelizing. Transactional analysis, primal scream, bioenergetics, yoga, guided fantasy, Arica, lomi body work, nude marathon, gestalt therapy, psychosynthesis, est, transcendental meditation—each of them is a blending of modern Western psychotherapy and Eastern religious thought. Proclaiming the innate goodness of man, the inevitability of human progress, and the inherent alterability of character, their mystical elements offer an air of the supernatural, the unexplainable for which human nature longs. In encouraging the worship of the "isolated self," or the supposed "higher" powers inside everyone, it denies the need of anyone—God or man—to help him rise to the higher sphere. Conveniently, there is no moral code, for one is told simply to look within himself for guidance.

It is practically impossible to count how many people are probing the mind control schemes; in addition to the ones listed above, there is rolfing, biofeedback, Silva Mind Control, the Feldenkrais method, esalen, and the more traditional Buddhism and Hinduism. The participants number in the millions, all of them feeding on a romantic notion that inner experience alone can transform reality and that anyone can knead his own life into a perfect work of art.

And while all this is permeating the people's minds, sales of religious books are booming. Sales are up 16% over last year, accounting for \$400 million of the book publishers' total of \$3.8 billion. In addition to religious bookstores, secular outlets, such as department and chain grocery stores, sell a substantial number of inspirational titles.

So what are all these religious movements really accomplishing? The spiritualizing of the world—not conversion, to be sure, but a certain "making aware" of religious influences. Every single person is accepting some form of religion or other, be it mind control, Christian, Catholic, or Eastern thought. Thus when the final message is brought to them, each one will have in some way been "educated" concerning spirituality in one form or another. The fact that all of these movements are not preaching full obedi-

ence to God's law places them on the opposite side from Him. But because of the religious dabblings, each person will feel himself qualified to judge what he hears from his own personal experience—and thus everyone will make up his mind either for or against the truth presented. There will be no one undecided in that day, for all will have been "spiritualized," feeling qualified to judge what they hear not by God's word but by their own experience.

Our job is to continue preaching the Bible as the only way to truth—about oneself, God, and the future.

### Rational reasons for vegetarianism

Newsman Mike Wallace and Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon are just two of the well-known people who see reduction of meat consumption as a simple solution to the world starvation problem. In "A Case against Waste and Other Excesses" (*Christianity Today*, July 16, 1976), writer Stanley C. Baldwin said he was amazed when Mike Wallace on CBS "Sixty Minutes" stated unequivocally that "If we would feed our beef only a little less grain [about 2 weeks less per animal], the grain saved would be enough to keep everybody in the world from starving." The statistical information presented to him by Mr. Wallace's producer was valid. It would take some adjustment of the U.S. grain production, but how can anyone justify wasteful production on the grounds of the people's palates—especially when all facts point to the current meat consumption rate as causative agent in many diseases? Mr. Baldwin states, "Not only must animals be sacrificed to our appetites if we eat meat, but so in a sense must our fellow human beings, for the grain we feed our meat animals is kept—figuratively, at least—off the plates of starving people around the world."

"Senator Mark Hatfield explained it this way in a speech given in St. Paul, Minnesota, in June, 1974:

"If you take an acre of land, it can produce varying amounts of protein depending upon how it is utilized. If you plant soybeans, you have a yield of about 667 pounds of protein. Corn will produce 435 pounds; rice yields about 323 pounds of protein; wheat gives forth about 227 pounds. But if you devote that land to feed for poultry and meat, look what happens. For chickens, an acre will give you about 97 pounds of protein. For raising pigs, one acre of land and its feed converts into 29 pounds of protein. Finally, for every acre of land in America devoted to raising beef, we yield a mere 9 pounds of protein."

Furthermore, Mr. Baldwin pleads for less waste; the above facts show the great waste current right now in raising so much meat. He quotes Gandhi: "The earth

provides enough for everyman's need, but not everyman's greed," adding, nor "for everyman's waste."

Time has shown that the government will do comparatively little to aid starving people, and besides its aid is generally filtered off by the rich in the needy countries. But there are grass-roots organizations to which we can send money saved by our own elimination of waste.

### Arms to China

With the death of Mao Tse-tung, a good many people expect China to move into the world mainstream. Along with this, the opportunists see a chance to make a profit—and help arm the rest of the world. In a recent issue, we showed how the whole world is arming to the teeth and how the present tensions in Africa are helping bring this about. Now Former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger in a copyrighted interview with *U.S. News and World Report* says the U.S. should not reject out of hand the idea of supplying sophisticated weapons to China, though it should not press them on the Chinese. He says there is some interest in U.S. anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons within the Chinese military establishment, but, for diplomatic reasons, that interest is well concealed.

China is already a nuclear power, even though at present a weak one. They exploded a nuclear device in early October, and while Americans were being assured that there were absolutely no dangers from the fallout that swept across the Pacific Ocean and dropped on parts of the U.S., authorities thought it necessary to test milk samples and issue precautionary warnings. If full-scale atomic war were ever to start, no corner of the earth's surface would be untouched. With the way things stand right now, in 25 years China will undoubtedly be a formidable nuclear power.

### Less imperialism, more violence

The cost of independence, according to Joseph C. Harsch (*The Christian Science Monitor*, August 31, 1976), is a release of local animosities, rivalries, and ambitions. As the various countries around the world have thrown off their colonialist masters, their hope was for tranquility, prosperity, and individual freedom, but they have found that independence does not automatically bring these conditions. At a recent meeting of the nonaligned nations at Colombo on the island of Sri Lanka, the grievances against each other took up more time than the old anti-colonial resentments which used to be the main time consumer. A lot more wars, civil wars, strains, and tension go along with the increase in nonaligned countries. Wars and rumors of wars are an indication that Christ's coming is near



at hand, and the governmental systems currently being established all over the world certainly are lending themselves to that fulfillment.

## Discretionary killing

It doesn't matter if the Catholics have taken it as their pet issue—abortion is a symptom of the low value society places on human life. In a commentary on the subject under the heading "Discretionary Killing," George F. Will wrote in *Newsweek*, September 20, 1976: "It is neither surprising nor regrettable that the abortion epidemic alarms many thoughtful people. Last year there were a million legal abortions in the U.S. and 50 million worldwide. The killing of fetuses on this scale is a revolution against the judgment of generations. And this revolution in favor of discretionary killing has not run its course. . . .

"At a 1972 conference some eminent scientists argued that infants with Down's syndrome are a social burden and should be killed, when possible, by 'negative euthanasia,' the denial of aid needed for survival. It was the morally deformed condemning the genetically defective. Who will they condemn next? Old people, although easier to abandon, can be more inconvenient than unwanted children. Scientific advances against degenerative diseases will enable old people to (as will be said) 'exist' longer. The argument for the discretionary killing of these burdensome folks will be that 'mere' existence, not 'meaningful' life, would be ended by euthanasia. . . .

"The casual manipulation of life is not harmless. As Dr. [Leon R.] Kass [a University of Chicago biologist] says: 'We have paid some high prices for the technological conquest of nature, but none so high as the intellectual and spiritual costs of seeing nature as mere material for our manipulation, exploitation and transformation. With the powers for biological engineering now gathering, there will be splendid new opportunities for a similar degradation of our view of man. Indeed, we are already witnessing the erosion of our idea of man as something splendid or divine, as a creature with freedom and dignity. And clearly, if we come to see ourselves as meat, then meat we shall become.'"

It is impossible for a Christian to view abortion impassively. The more familiar one becomes with this aspect of taking life, the further he wants to stay away from it, whether it is the nurse asked to assist, the doctor asked to perform it, the relative or friend asked to support it, or the mother carrying the child. Let our consciences not be numbed to this sickening issue but view with awe and nurture the miracle of life, which should be solely the product of love.



# Farewell,

**I**N old year drawing to a close and a new one beginning—this is an occurrence which repeats itself every 12 months. It is a special time when the world leaders, governments, religious organizations, clubs, societies, and individuals take time both to look backward to the year just passed and reminisce about its good times and its adversities and to look forward to the new year—to speculate and to plan programs vital to the

operation of each organization. Time is being planned. The 12 months ahead of us are being filled with activities that must be accomplished in that given time.

For many, this will be the year when time runs out for them, and all the money in the world cannot buy them even a second more. Many who are ill and suffer greatly hope that time will be over for them, and yet time lingers on. To an inactive person, time passes with interminable slowness. To an active person, there never seems to be enough time to do all the things he wants to do. Some people waste more time on frivolous, wasteful things than do others.

Christ told a parable in the Bible of a man who was going to travel into a far country. Before he left, he called his servants together to entrust to them his goods. He did not distribute an equal portion to each one, but to every man he gave according to his ability. These goods were talents. The man traveling to a far country represents Christ, and we are the servants. We have been given talents to use. Time is one of the talents given to every one of us. Much depends on the way we use it. Time squandered can never be recovered. Time should be used as if each minute of our lives were the last, and yet time should be carefully planned ahead. The value of time is priceless. All our time belongs to God; of the talents He has given to us, He will require the strictest account of our time and how we have used it. It is our solemn obligation to improve it. When Jesus was on earth, He regarded each moment as very precious. Nowhere do we read in the Bible that He ever whiled away His time in idleness.

Our time here on earth has only one purpose—to form our characters for the future, immortal life. ". . . The world's incessant labor ends in nothingness unless a true knowledge in regard to eternal life is gained. The man who appreciates time as his working

To every thing there is a season,  
And a time to every purpose under the heaven:  
A time to be born, and a time to die;  
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up  
that which is planted;  
A time to kill, and a time to heal;  
A time to break down, and a time to build up;  
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
A time to cast away stones, and a time to  
gather stones together;  
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain  
from embracing;  
A time to get, and a time to lose;  
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;  
A time to rend, and a time to sew;  
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
A time to love, and a time to hate;  
A time of war, and a time of peace.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-8

# Old Year

By ANNELI MARTIN




day will fit himself for a mansion and for a life that is immortal. It is well that he was born." —Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 342. While the work of our character building progresses, we also must remember our fellowmen and bring them the message of salvation. Now is the time to labor for them.

We can all improve on our use of time, treasuring each moment of it. Success in using our time to its fullest potential is achieved by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption. It is true that temporal and earthly matters must be taken care of, but diligence in God's service is as much a part of true religion as is devotion.

Often time spent in aimless, idle talking and joking can be used much more constructively. Many folks complain that they have so much to do that they can find no time for reading. Keep a good book handy while commuting to work, while waiting for transportation, while traveling, while waiting for meals, while waiting for a friend who is late for an appointment, and while waiting at the doctor's or dentist's office. There are innumerable wasted moments in daily life.

Organize your work habits well in advance. There are people who are always on the go and yet accomplish nothing; such faults can be corrected. By using a few simple work methods, ten hours' work may be done in five! Decide beforehand the time required to do a given task, and then stick to your schedule. Have your tools always tidy and in their allotted spaces so you don't spend twenty minutes getting organized to do five minutes' work.

Whatever our line of work is, the Bible tells us to be "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; . . ." "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." Romans 12:11; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:24. Our life is too short to be trifled away. We cannot waste our time or devote it to selfish pleasure. We do not have enough time for the indulgence of sin. Now is the time to prepare for the searching judgment. The question for us to answer in the new year and always thereafter is, "In the great judgment day, how shall we render our account to God?" 



## NOW IS THE TIME

Now is the time to prepare for the storm  
That threatens from sea to sea,  
To contemplate solemnly what is to come,  
And what our reaction will be.

To settle our faith in the living God,  
To trust in His keeping power,  
To plan to meet with unflinching face  
The troubles of time's last hour.

To follow our Lord through affliction's fires,  
To suffer burnings untold,  
That these may consume the dross in our lives  
And leave but purified gold!

—Nathaniel Krum





Beacon of hope, faith, truth  
in a confused world.

We believe

The Bible to be infallible, absolute truth.

The devil to be literal, untiring instigator  
of evil.

Jesus Christ to be the world's only Saviour,  
who taught love revealed by obedience.

His coming to be imminent, visible, triumphant,  
judging His enemies and rewarding  
His children of faith.

## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

M. P. Ringelberg  
Dorothy M. Demarest  
Larry Don Watts

## EDITORIAL SECRETARY

Barbara L. Watts

## WRITING STAFF

Henry Dering  
Verica V. Dering  
Kim Farranto  
Evelyn Holmstroem  
Ruth Jennings  
Betty J. Kramer  
Helmut H. Kramer  
Oscar Kramer  
Anneli Martin  
Timo Martin  
Steinar E. Myhre  
Vicki Reynolds  
Michele Ringelberg  
Michael Swenson  
Chris Teske  
Mary Toczyński

## CORRESPONDENCE

Address all correspondence to  
International Missionary Society  
1151 Xenia Street  
Denver, Colorado 80220

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$7.50 per year

(In Colorado, add 26 cents sales tax)

Payments for orders and gift subscriptions  
to **THE SABBATH WATCHMAN** should be  
made payable to

Religious Liberty Publishing Assn.  
1151 Xenia Street  
Denver, Colorado 80220

## ORDER FORM

- ☐ Personal subscription  
☐ Gift subscription  
☐ Renewal or address change

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

# Undecided?

As the recent Presidential election ground to a close, it became increasingly apparent that indecision has become a way of life. On the cover of the October 25, 1976, *U.S. News and World Report* was a colorful campaign button sporting black letters spelling **UNDECIDED**. On page 19 of the issue, George H. Gallup wrote what he felt was behind all the indecision: "One factor is an apparent lack of enthusiasm for either candidate." Secondly, "Another thing is that Ford and Carter are not seen as being far apart on certain issues. This, too, makes it harder for people to make a choice."

As we think of these two reasons, it should be clear to us that we in America are facing the same tragic mental condition of all other peoples—we are tired of this wicked, mixed up world, and we can no longer tell what is right or wrong.

What is the reason for this in a country so wealthy and so blessed with every good gift of freedom? Our nation has become saturated with too much. We have become selfish, living for pleasure only. The whole tenor of thinking is, "Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die." Isaiah 22:13. There is an upsurge of religion, but as Christ spoke to the Jews, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:8, 9.

Science says there is trouble ahead; education is facing a downhill slide; the government budget is overwhelming; employment is precarious; welfare problems mount; and the military need is critical with the rumblings of war throughout the world.

Yet, with all these surrounding influences, the individual who will trust in God and believe the promises of Christ's soon coming can retain a deep enthusiasm in life and can be led by the Spirit of God to distinguish right from wrong. He can have peace and happiness in obedience to God and hope in the future.

It is a wonderful thing to turn from the problems, the trials, and the hurts of this life and find comfort in Christ. The words of Jesus are not in vain when He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30. This is an invitation that we dare not slight, because we all need help. And when so many of our young people are floundering—lost, lacking enthusiasm for that which is good, and unable to distinguish between right and wrong—we as adults must arise and go to our Father in heaven, guiding our children and young people to the only hope that is left. We must become new creatures with enthusiasm and devotion. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21.

Wouldn't it be nice to be a brand new creature, a perfect person—one who is happy, free from all defects? We can be! Christ paid a terrible price in order to rebuild and repair our characters. He paid the inestimable price with His life on the cross of Calvary. Why do

we leave the Lord Jesus in the manger as a baby? Why don't we follow His thirty years and learn of that character that is offered to us free? What qualities of riches we can have as the fruits of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance"! Galatians 5:22, 23. This is an excellent repair of our character defects—"idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:20, 21.

Why are we so undecided? Why do we lack enthusiasm for the plan of redemption? Why can't we choose righteousness in Christ? Because we do not want to pay the price of giving up sin and allow the Lord to repair us and transform us into His likeness.

How often have we heard people say, "I wish I'd been born another person"? We would like to turn ourselves in on a new model—a better model—like we do with cars. Sometimes it's too expensive to repair a car. "To dramatize the rising costs of trips to auto-repair shops, the American Mutual Insurance Alliance had an independent consultant compute what it would cost to have a repair garage, using new parts, put together a totally demolished 1976 Chevrolet Impala. The factory price of the car is \$4,438; the put-together cost? \$19,979." —*The Reader's Digest*, October 1976, p. 40. So, naturally, we turn it in on a new model.

But—praise God!—we each as individuals remain that personality that entered this life, born as a distinct identity. We don't have to be traded for a new model, for though sin and death come upon all men because of Adam's fall, salvation has been offered to all by Christ's death and blood. He took our sins upon Him and offers His righteousness free to us. If we accept His offer to repair our characters and make each one of us a new being, we will begin to realize what an infinite price has been paid for such a redemption. We are still the same model, but brand new! Let's realize this dream, this hope, and be willing to exchange our defects for Christ's perfection.

A free lance writer, Frank Harvey, adopted the following philosophy for his new career: "Pick the most demanding mission, go through it

yourself, then tell what happened. . . . When a chance is offered, take it."

We are to take Christ's offer of salvation. We are to take the chance and enter "with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:1, 2. Then we can tell the story to every person of a hope that no mortal can offer, for "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Corinthians 2:9.

Undecided? Don't be. Take a chance. Believe, and with enthusiasm take your stand with Jesus Christ, the Lord. His promises are sure.

*Dorothy M. Demaree*

## A PRAYER FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Bless Thou, this year, O Lord!  
 Make rich its days  
 With health, and work, and prayer, and praise,  
 And helpful ministry  
 To needy folk.  
 Speak Thy soft word  
 In cloudy days;  
 Nor let us think ourselves forgot  
 When common lot  
 Of sorrow hems us round.  
 Let generous impulse shame the niggard dole  
 That dwarfs the soul.  
 May no one shirk his share of work  
 Through selfish thought.  
 Each day fulfil Thy holy will  
 In yielded lives;  
 And still the tumult  
 Of desires  
 Debased.  
 May faith and hope and love,  
 Inspired from above,  
 Increase.  
 Bless Thou, this year, O Lord!

—Andrew S. C. Clarke



# IN THIS ISSUE

## THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, Part 2 INSPIRED WRITINGS page 2

God's communication to man has been recorded, compiled, and translated for the benefit of anyone who will read it. But not all writings that claim to come directly from God are to be accepted. What is the basis for knowing what writings constitute the Spirit of Prophecy? Furthermore, once that is determined, how are we to understand them?

## NO! page 5

What does the Christian say "No!" to? Discernment and conviction are required in the use of this small word and its opposite.

## THE CHARACTER THAT GOD APPROVES page 7

Excellence is the goal placed before young people and those responsible for teaching them. Every moment is a golden opportunity to exercise one's abilities and be ready to step into the kingdom of God.

## SOUND THE WARNING! page 8

God's warning is very different from those of men, for the part He proclaims is real. There are warnings in the Bible to individuals as well as to groups of people and the whole world. What is the warning for today? Once that is determined, we face the responsibility of sounding it to the world.

## PEACE ON EARTH page 11

Are the common concepts of the meaning of "peace on earth" what the song of the angels meant?

## CHRIST, THE GIVER page 12

At this "giving" time of the year, it is well to view Christ, the greatest example of all giving. There is no end to His gifts, for they are past, present, and future; giving is the essence of His being—and it is for the Christian as well.

## BEWARE THE PHARISEE! page 14

Unfortunately we can't confine the pharisaical attitude to the days of Jesus. The illustration is as valid today as it was then—and the remedy for it is also the same.

## THE POWER OF THE PLATE page 16

There are ways to overcome this temptation, and they are very practical. But they are helpful only if we see that their purpose is to help us be proper representatives of our Creator.

## FAREWELL, OLD YEAR page 20

It's time to look back. What was accomplished? What could have been different? What use did we make of our time? How many more years are left us we don't know, but we can take each day and live it our best, controlling circumstances with God's help.

## REGULAR FEATURES

### Current Sphere page 18

Spiritualizing the world. Rational reasons for vegetarianism. Arms to China. Less imperialism, more violence. Discretionary killing.

### Editorial page 22

Undecided?

Coming in January 1977 . . .

Special Issue—REFORMATION