



# The Sabbath Watchman

September-October 2013

## **Deep Wounds**

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# Killing Selfishness

One of the articles in this issue contains a statement that the tenth of the Ten Commandments contains all the other nine commandments. That thought is echoed in this statement: "Under the general heading of selfishness came every other sin." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 384.

The underlying theme of the articles that have come together in this issue speak in one way or another to the perfection question: "How does one overcome?"

If in the tenth commandment are all the others, should not overcoming be as simple as becoming thankful in every situation, because thankfulness is the reverse of selfishness?

Are we wishing for a closer walk with God? Practice thankfulness, appreciation, and encouragement, for as we sow we reap.

Looking more closely at the Ten Commandments in reverse, notice this interesting progression of relationships:

10. First, to be covetous, we must forget–forget that all we have is on loan from God.

Even the very air we breathe is a gift.

9. To practice selfishness, we must be in denial–and bear false witness against God.

8. That leads to and precedes stealing.

7. Adultery is a special type of stealing.

6. Murder is part of and a result of adulterating, which leads to ...

5. Disrespect of family and social order–and even treason, which leads to ...

4. War, the opposite of peace and rest (Sabbath), which leads to 3. Famine, 2. Disease, and 1. Death.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine...." Proverbs 17:22. Let's count our many blessings and do it daily. By keeping our eyes upon Jesus, all the garbage of our lives will be forgotten in Him. Then, in the time of trouble we will have come to the point where we "cannot bring to mind any particular sins." –*Signs of the Times*, November 27, 1879.




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## The Sabbath Watchman

Vol. 88, No. 5

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

We believe:

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

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# Deep Wounds



*By Jose V. Giner*

**H**ow many new and old wounds are destroying the lives of millions of people! Open wounds, festering wounds, terribly painful wounds, deep wounds. I am not referring to physical wounds but those of the soul, which are sometimes worse than the others. I have met many people in this condition, and sometimes I have suffered the laceration of these wounds myself.

## *Human vulnerability*

There are so many things that can hurt us. No wonder, for we live in a hostile environment where many things, situations, and people attack us, threaten us, and steal our joy and peace.

I baptized a lady who had been sexually abused by a family member. Before her baptism, she cried and told me that that wound had caused a lot of pain throughout her life; it was still open and bleeding. I remember the case of a young man who attended church and desired to give his heart to Christ. I met him at a youth camp in a poor country where I was visiting; he was 25 or 26 years old. He requested pastoral counseling and told me that his father abused

him sexually as a child. Shaking his head, he said, "I'll get even with him; I will find him and kill him." I spent a lot of time helping this young man, reading various Bible verses, praying together, and giving him counsel to heal his deep wound.

I still remember clearly the case of another young man who attended one of my seminars. Although he participated in all of the activities, he seemed distant, sad, and depressed. One day he came to me and asked me to pray for him. He opened his heart and told me he couldn't get out of his mind the scenes of death of some soldiers he had killed in battle before he knew the Lord. This wound continued to bleed nonstop despite the time that had passed.

In another country, I met with a man of about fifty years of age who often came to church. He was a mercenary, a guerrilla, and more. He had spent time in prison and made terrible experiences. He told me his story; it was heartbreaking and full of terrible wounds. I have met people who were outraged, insulted, maligned, unjustly criticized, abandoned, marginalized, full of pride and hatred, making it easy to conclude that all of these men and women were wounded by life.

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When we try to give an explanation for these conditions, we can find only one: We are human beings with a sinful nature. God created this world perfect, with perfect people; this means that Adam and Eve received the most precious gift they could have received—free will, absolute liberty to act, for otherwise they would have been simply machines. Sadly, in their freedom, they chose to sin and thus produced a tide of evil that covers all humanity to this day.

The devil was cast out of heaven to this earth because of his rebellion. He was the cause of our first parents' fall

and stole from Adam the dominion over this earth, which resulted in tyranny, degradation, and death. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter 5:8.

Satan is "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4), whose goal is to destroy every trace of the beauty God created in this world, the image of God in man, marriage, youth, homes, and the relationship between parents and children; to corrupt government institutions; and to cause sickness, addiction, pain, confusion, fear, and death. He has spent thousands of years preparing the most subtle and powerful temptations to make human beings fall. What for? To accuse them before God and thus offend Him as their Creator. Nothing is more pleasing to the adversary than to make those who are created by God suffer.

### Healed wounds

While the devil is pleased to hurt us, God delights in healing our wounds: "For I will restore health

unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds" (Jeremiah 30:17), the Lord declares. This is what all who have been troubled, abused, tried in many different circumstances, and wounded to the depths of their being have to understand very well. Perhaps we have been used by the enemy to wound others. Even so, there is a remedy.

The Bible promises that the Lord has a solution for the deep wounds of the soul, as confirmed and reinforced by the story of the man who had been attacked by robbers, who "stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." Luke 10:30.

The man's name is unknown, but it could very well be John, Joseph, Peter, Elisa, Lourdes, Daniel, or the same as yours. This person represents the entire human race. It is interesting to note that the story is perfectly adapted to the situation of every human being in this world, which is why the Lord Jesus used it as a practical illustration to teach us a lesson. Let's see what it is.

The man was "going down" from Jerusalem to Jericho. Luke 10:30. This denotes the degradation of spiritual life. Adam and Eve were placed in Eden, which was created by God, where there was nothing lacking for their joy and perfect peace. But because of sin they "went down" to a level of degradation and death, "For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. The name Jerusalem—*Yerushalayim* in Hebrew—means "house of peace," from two Hebrew words, *yeru*, meaning "home," and *shalem* or *shalom*, meaning "peace." Other scholars say it means "perfect city," or "city of one who is perfect." In Arabic it is called *Al-Quds*, meaning "sacred."

One hypothesis is that the name Jericho comes from the Canaanite term *Yareah*, signifying "moon;" this opinion is supported by the fact that Jericho was an ancient center for worship of lunar gods, especially Astarte, goddess of the moon. See *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chapter 45, "The Fall of Jericho." "Here centered all that was vilest and most degrading in the religion of the Canaanites." P. 487. Jericho was destroyed by the Hebrews who had left Egypt and were now under the command of Joshua.

Thus, the man went down from Jerusalem, the city of peace, to Jericho, the main headquarters of Idolatry. This is a picture of us. Because

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of sin, man fell from Eden to Jericho, the world corrupted by evil, wounded by Satan and left on the side of the road. Isaiah gave a clinical report of that human being—of you and me: “From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.” Isaiah 1:6.

What could a man do to heal his wounds? Nothing! Having no strength or remedies available, alone and hurt, he would be left to die or hope that someone would offer a helping hand. We are unable to do anything to change our situation as beings with a fallen nature. This is our clinical situation. As much as governments and specialists in this world have tried to change human behavior, little or nothing has been achieved. The redemption of humanity is not in human hands but in God’s hands. The priest and Levite who had the opportunity to help, but passed by, represent false religions and philosophies; all they do is theorize and leave the person in his wounded condition, providing no solution.

Only one person appears on the scene with the ability and desire to help the man who had fallen—the Samaritan. This good man represents our Lord Jesus Christ: “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.” Luke 10:33.

Let’s consider the end of the story. The Samaritan “went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” Luke 10:34. Note that the Samaritan used oil and wine to heal the wounds. The use of these two natural substances was widespread throughout Palestine, as shown in the verse from Isaiah that we quoted above: “They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.” Isaiah 1:6.

The wine represents Christ’s blood. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ...” “This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you.” 1 Peter

1:18, 19; Luke 22:20. If you want the Lord to heal your deep wound, let Him pour His healing wine—His precious blood—over you. Only through His death on the cross is there a way of salvation for the sinful human being. Right now you can accept Him as your personal Saviour, confess your sins, and allow His precious blood to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. This will happen if you ask.

Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus not only cleanses the wound but also heals it by the action of His Spirit. Oil—usually olive oil—is an appropriate natural substance to illustrate the work of God’s Spirit, for in natural medicine it has many benefits. It restores the skin and regenerates cells. It acts as an emollient and heals skin conditions and ulcers. It is a powerful antioxidant and is a rich source of fatty acids and triglycerides.

God instructed His people to use oil as fuel for the lamps in the tabernacle, and these were kept burning always. Leviticus 24:2. This was a symbol of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit among the Israelites. When a person was anointed by divine direction, oil was poured on his head, as was the case of David, who was anointed by Samuel. 1 Samuel 10:1. The tabernacle and its utensils as well as the priests were consecrated to God by the holy anointing oil. Exodus 30:22-30. All of this portrayed the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus gave His Spirit to convince people of “sin,” “righteousness,” and “judgment” (John 16:8), meaning that when we experience the desire to change our lives, our natures are transformed. When we feel bad about something improper that we have done and seek to bring our lives into harmony with Christ’s life, it is the Spirit that is working in us. It is not because we have anything good in us; no, it is the Holy Spirit trying to take possession of our lives, direct our thoughts to God, and conform our characters to Christ’s divine character.

Yes, the Holy Spirit wants to restore your wounded soul, to comfort you with the promises of the Word, to give you courage to face life’s difficulties, and to lead you to repentance. It is God’s Spirit that does this, the divine oil soothing your pain. Let Him heal you! Let God take away

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Everything we do  
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that memory that torments you, those words that hurt you, that offense, that damage that afflicts you, so you are not oppressed by the pain or plagued by the bitterness of the past that hurt you. Rather, forgive those who hurt you, plead for pardon for those who injured you, and decide to start living without chains.

“Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it?” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50.

### Christ's return

The story tells us that the Good Samaritan took the wounded man to an inn and the next day gave money to the innkeeper, saying, “Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.” Luke 10:35. Now the hurt man is safe. What is significant about this last part of the story? The inn is the church, and the innkeeper represents those who are in the church, each of whose wounds Christ bandaged and treated with wine and oil, to be kept until His return.

What a beautiful illustration of the church! It is a place where the wounded are cared for, a place where the soul damaged by sin is restored and learns to know the Divine Benefactor, a place that points the way to heaven and its conditions, a place where the innkeeper—the members—have received an order from Christ and carry it out. This is the church.

Let us note that the Good Samaritan, Christ, says that He will return and repay the innkeeper for what he spent to take care of the wounded man. If there is anything that stands out with clarity in the Bible, it is the second coming of Christ. Right in Genesis it was announced, and it is repeated all through the sacred pages. The Biblical canon closes in Revelation with the words, “Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Revelation 22:20. The second coming of Christ will forever close the chapter of human suffering in which we now live. That is the reason we are called “Adventists,” for we believe that the Lord Jesus is going to come back. Everything we do in this world for the

restoration of souls will one day be more than recompensed by God at His second coming. He has pledged His word, and thus it will be! Do you believe this? God will do it in you.

### Conclusion

What a wonderful hope! Jesus was telling His hearers a story with a real application. No matter what kind of injury you have, no matter how serious it is, no matter that you have bled and been left languishing and suffering on the road of life—even if it made you suffer, there is water today if you want it.

The Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Samaritan, comes with compassion and love to meet us and heal us. That is the good news of the gospel! Enough of bad news! Enough of defeatism and despair! Christ, the light of the world, has come to enlighten us. He is the Physician of the soul who has come to heal us. Do you want Him to do it in you? “He is watching over you, trembling child of God. Are you tempted? He will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. Are you wounded? He will heal. The Lord ‘tellethe the number of the stars,’ and yet ‘He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.’ Psalm 147:4, 3.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 329. God bless you! **SW**



# In the Spider Web



One of the most important questions in a person's life is: How am I saved? How do I get free of sin and gain the victory over sin in my life? These questions remained in my mind for a long time; and although I am a fourth-generation Seventh-day Adventist Reformer, the answers have been hard to get.

Seeing members in the church who, after 30, 40, and even 50 years, are the same as when they were baptized, with no real change in their lives, although many of them spoke and preached about Jesus, about the plan of salvation, and God's love—and sometimes even boasting of holiness and eternal life—I wondered, Is it possible to get rid of sin and to conquer in this life, or not? And it was even more painful when I saw that my life was the same as that of others. The patriarch Job tried to understand these things as well when he wrote: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Job 14:4.

The answer seems simple and easy enough: Yes, we can conquer sin; we can gain the victory over sin in this short life. But to understand how this happens, and the principle behind it in one's practical life, is like trying to crack a very hard nutshell. Why is it that many times when we put our goal high—not to sin but to do good—we fail again and again?

I was praying to the good Lord to help me understand this miracle of salvation, and I studied the word of God to have the experience of salvation, deliverance from sin. Then, some years ago, on the occasion of our yearly conference in Albertirsa, Hungary, the brethren asked me to speak from the word of God for the morning worship.

It was summertime, and since the windows were open in the bedroom where we were sleeping, some mosquitos flew into the room. I prayed for the Holy Spirit to guide me in what I should say for the worship service. As I was preparing, I looked up. In one corner of the bedroom was a spider watching a mosquito that had just gotten caught in the spider web. The poor little thing started to suddenly fly away and escape the web. But the more it tried, the more tightly it was entangled. I could see that it tried with all its power ... until finally it could not move at all in the spider web! And then the spider came along, killed it, and ate it. After that, another mosquito accidentally flew into the web and was about to meet the same fate. But before the spider could kill it and eat it, I destroyed the web. And then, praise God! Thank God! Eureka! I found the answer to my question about victory over sin!

We are like the mosquitos—flying around, without a care, and suddenly caught by Satan,

*By Janos Bojboi*

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I could see that it tried with all its power ... until finally it could not move at all in the spider web!

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The solution is not in  
you, in what you can  
do, or in what you  
can produce!

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the spider, or ensnared in his web! What do we do many times when we realize that we have done something wrong? We try to get rid of it. And the more we try, the more we fall or sin. Why? Because we try to conquer sin in our human power and without Jesus the Helper, Jesus the Saviour from sin. Often we use human traditions, tools, or techniques to try to get rid of SIN, of Satan!!!

This is the problem. As long as we do not recognize our weak points and do not ask Jesus and the Holy Spirit to help, our condition or situation is hopeless, miserable! Satan is happy when these things happen. We have to realize that Jesus destroys the spider web and the spider. He provides the necessary external help—supernatural power to free us from sin. And if the Son of God makes us free, we are going to be free indeed. We will know the truth, and the truth will make us free!!! John 8:36, 32.

Free from what? This is the question. Free from human philosophy, free from traditions, free from human teachings, and also free from sin.

When communism fell in Romania, the first words spoken on the TV news were: “Brothers, we are free!” These words were so sweet, so good to hear! It was like somebody taking from your shoulders a heavy burden that you had carried for so long and that was so terrible. Free—freedom—that was the song we sang, that was the spirit that was in the air, everywhere in the hearts of the Romanian people. Our faces were happy, our smiles were big, and our hearts thrilled with joy and gratitude for what had been achieved through the tremendous help and sacrifice of others.

The solution is not in you, in what you can do, or in what you can produce! Oh, no! The solution is in Jesus, the Solution is JESUS and His merits, sacrifice, and power, what He has done for you and me. He alone is able to do this great miracle for you today in your life and in you! Praise His holy name! He is the mighty God, the Deliverer, as is written in Exodus 14:10-16. The great deliverance! The children of Israel wanted to die in Egypt as slaves!!! Do you also want to die in Egypt (sin) as Satan’s slave? Moses told them: “The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” Exodus 14:14. How can one

be still when he sees the Red Sea in front of him, the mountains on both sides, and the enemy at his back—Pharaoh and his army? The Lord will fight for you! And because the Lord fights for you, you are going to have the victory! Maybe you say, “No! I will fight for my life, for myself!” You are going to die if you do that, because the enemy is stronger and more numerous than you. The Lord said to Moses: “Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.” Exodus 14:15.

In life, you may lose a battle, but you will not lose the war when you have Jesus on your side! Another similar example is in the book of Samuel when the Lord told His people that the battle was the Lord’s, not theirs! “And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.” 1 Samuel 17:47. Thank God that with Jesus we are more than overcomers. “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” Romans 8:37. “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:11.

Do you understand this, brother and sister? Let me explain it in short: With Jesus is victory; without Him is defeat. The holy word says: “Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God’s. To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you.” 2 Chronicles 20:15-17.

“I am sure Satan with his hellish agencies, is striving his best to dishearten and discourage; but we must not be discouraged, neither must we fail. We must suffer loss and be spoken against; and have false witness borne against us, and take it patiently for Christ’s sake. One thing is

sure—God is true. We may lean heavily upon Him, and we shall not become confused amid the Babel of voices. We must put the armor on, and keep it on. Then what? Fight manfully the battles of the Lord, and having done all, stand ready for another conflict. We must keep in harmony, taking the whole armor of God. We must have increased faith and move forward, carrying this banner of truth—the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. We must not think that we are the generals but that we are under the mighty General of armies. Oh, let us pray as never before. Let us believe with heart and soul the words of John, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.’ It is a poor time, when in the fierce conflict, to show one particle of cowardice. We have a General who never lost a battle. Have faith in God and we shall gain the victory.” —*Bible Training School*, March 1, 1909.

“Jesus continued: ‘That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’ By nature the heart is evil, and ‘who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.’ Job 14:4. No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.’ ‘Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.’ Romans 8:7; Matthew 15:19. The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.

We need to be on God’s side, we need to surrender, we need to die to self, we need to be born again, we need a supernatural element, a power, a Person to be free forever from the spider web.

Let us pray to Jesus to help us. Let Him destroy the spider web and the spider is my prayer in Jesus’ precious name! Glory to Him! **SW**



“The question of how to obtain a knowledge of God is to all a life-and-death question. Read Christ’s prayer to His Father, intended not merely as an important lesson in education for the disciples, but to come down through all time for the benefit of those who would read the Inspired Writings. ‘Father,’ He prayed, ‘the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.’ ” —(Manuscript 15, 1898) *Christ Triumphant*, p. 221.



# Selfishness/ Unselfishness

By Ellen G. White

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It was to give in His own life an illustration of unselfishness that Jesus came in the form of humanity.

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**U**nselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name.

It was to give in His own life an illustration of unselfishness that Jesus came in the form of humanity. And all who accept this principle are to be workers together with Him in demonstrating it in practical life. To choose the right because it is right; to stand for truth at the cost of suffering and sacrifice—"this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17. —*Education*, pp. 154, 155.

"... It is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways, have been placed in close Christian relationship to His

church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons who need our sympathy, love, and disinterested benevolence. This is God's test of our character. If we have the true religion of the Bible, we shall feel that a debt of love, kindness, and interest is due to Christ in behalf of His brethren; and we can do no less than to show our gratitude for His immeasurable love to us while we were sinners unworthy of His grace, by having a deep interest and unselfish love for those who are our brethren, and who are less fortunate than ourselves. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 511.

Yet many live in this world as useless machines, as though they hardly existed. They brighten the path of none, they are a blessing to none. They live only to burden others. So far as their influence on the side of right is concerned, they are mere ciphers; but they tell with weight upon the wrong side. Search the lives of such closely, and scarcely an act of disinter-

ested benevolence can be found. When they die, their memory dies with them. Their names soon perish; for they cannot live, even in the affections of their friends, by means of true goodness and virtuous acts. With such persons life has been a mistake. They have not been faithful stewards. They have forgotten that their Creator has claims upon them and that He designs them to be active in doing good and in blessing others with their influence. Selfish interests attract the mind and lead to forgetfulness of God and of the purpose of their Creator. –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 522.

### “Shall He find faith?”

Genuine faith, sustained by works, is rare. But all who possess this faith will be men who will not lack influence. They will copy after Christ in that disinterested benevolence and interest in the work of saving souls that He had. The followers of Christ should value souls as He valued them. Their sympathies should be with the work of their dear Redeemer, and they should labor to save the purchase of His blood at any sacrifice. What are money, houses, and lands, in comparison with even one soul? –*Review and Herald*, February 23, 1886.

The Saviour’s entire life was characterized by disinterested benevolence and the beauty of holiness. He is our pattern of goodness. From the beginning of His ministry, men began to comprehend more clearly the character of God. He carried out His teachings in His own life. He showed consistency without obstinacy, benevolence without weakness, tenderness and sympathy without sentimentalism. He was highly social, yet He possessed a reserve that discouraged any familiarity. His temperance never led to bigotry or austerity. He was not conformed to the world, yet He was attentive to the wants of the least among men. –*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 262.

We must all be rich in good works in this life, if we would secure the future, immortal life. When the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, every man will be rewarded according to his works. Many names are enrolled on the church book that have robbery recorded against

them in the ledger of heaven. And unless these repent, and work for the Master with disinterested benevolence, they will certainly share in the doom of the unfaithful steward....

Cultivate the precious gift of love possessed so largely by our Saviour. His life was characterized by noble, disinterested benevolence. His whole life was not marred by one selfish act. –*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 327, 334.

There exists in the hearts of many an element of selfishness which clings to them like the leprosy. They have so long consulted their own wishes, their own pleasure and convenience, that they do not feel that others have claims upon them. Their thoughts, plans, and efforts are for themselves. They live for self, and do not cultivate disinterested benevolence, which if exercised, would increase and strengthen until it would be their delight to live for others’ good. This selfishness must be seen and overcome, for it is a grievous sin in the sight of God. They need to exercise a more special interest for humanity; and in thus doing, they would bring their souls into closer connection with Christ, and would be imbued with His Spirit, so that they would cleave to Him with so firm a tenacity that nothing could separate them from His love. –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 232.

There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself. No bird that cleaves the air, no animal that moves upon the ground, but ministers to some other life. There is no leaf of the forest, or lowly blade of grass, but has its ministry. Every tree and shrub and leaf pours forth that element of life without which neither man nor animal could live; and man and animal, in turn, minister to the life of tree and shrub and leaf. The flowers breathe fragrance and unfold their beauty in blessing to the world. The sun sheds its light to gladden a thousand worlds. The ocean, itself the source of all our springs and fountains, receives the streams from every land, but takes to give. The mists ascending from its bosom fall in showers to water the earth, that it may bring forth and bud. –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 20, 21

It was to give in His own life an illustration of unselfishness that Jesus came in the form of humanity. And all who accept this principle are

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There is nothing,  
save the selfish heart  
of man, that lives  
unto itself.

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to be workers together with Him in demonstrating it in practical life. To choose the right because it is right; to stand for truth at the cost of suffering and sacrifice—"this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17.

### Stellar examples

Very early in the history of the world is given the life record of one over whom this controversy of Satan's was waged.

Of Job, the patriarch of Uz, the testimony of the Searcher of hearts was, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." *Education*, pp. 154, 155. [Note that there is a distinct possibility that Job was a son of Issachar and grandson of Jacob. See Genesis 46:13.]

Against this man, Satan brought scornful charge: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast Thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?... Put forth Thine hand now, and touch all that he hath;" "touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face."

The Lord said unto Satan, "All that he hath is in thy power." "Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life."

Thus permitted, Satan swept away all that Job possessed—flocks and herds, menservants and maidens, sons and daughters; and he "smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown." Job 1:8-12; 2:5-7.

Still another element of bitterness was added to his cup. His friends, seeing in adversity but the retribution of sin, pressed on his bruised and burdened spirit their accusations of wrongdoing.

Seemingly forsaken of heaven and earth, yet holding fast his faith in God and his consciousness of integrity, in anguish and perplexity he cried:

*"My soul is weary of my life."*

*"O that Thou wouldst hide me in the grave,  
That Thou wouldst keep me secret, until Thy  
wrath be past,  
That Thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and  
remember me!"* Job 10:1; 14:13.

*"Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard:  
I cry for help, but there is no judgment....  
He hath stripped me of my glory,  
And taken the crown from my head....  
My kinsfolk have failed,  
And my familiar friends have forgotten me....  
They whom I loved are turned against me....  
Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my  
friends;  
For the hand of God hath touched me."*

*"Oh that I knew where I might find Him,  
That I might come even to His seat!...  
Behold, I go forward, but He is not there;  
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him:  
On the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot  
behold Him:*

*He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot  
see Him.  
But He knoweth the way that I take;  
When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."  
"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."*

*"I know that my Redeemer liveth,  
And that He shall stand up at the last upon the earth:  
And after my skin hath been destroyed, this shall be,  
Even from my flesh shall I see God:  
Whom I shall see for myself,  
And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger."  
Job 19:7-21, Revised Version; 23:3-10, Revised Ver-  
sion; 13:15; 19:25-27, Revised Version, margin.*

According to his faith, so was it unto Job. "When He hath tried me," he said, "I shall come forth as gold." Job 23:10. So it came to pass. By his patient endurance he vindicated his own character, and thus the character of Him whose representative he was. And "the Lord turned the captivity of Job:... also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.... So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." Job 42:10-12.

On the record of those who through self-abnegation have entered into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, stand—one in the Old Testament and one in the New—the names of Jonathan and of John the Baptist.

Jonathan, by birth heir to the throne, yet knowing himself set aside by the divine decree; to his rival the most tender and faithful of friends, shielding David's life at the peril of his

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By his patient  
endurance he  
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character, and thus  
the character of Him  
whose representative  
he was.

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own; steadfast at his father's side through the dark days of his declining power, and at his side falling at the last—the name of Jonathan is treasured in heaven, and it stands on earth a witness to the existence and the power of unselfish love.

John the Baptist, at his appearance as the Messiah's herald, stirred the nation. From place to place his steps were followed by vast throngs of people of every rank and station. But when the One came to whom he had borne witness, all was changed. The crowds followed Jesus, and John's work seemed fast closing. Yet there was no wavering of his faith. "He must increase," he said, "but I must decrease." John 3:30.

Time passed, and the kingdom which John had confidently expected was not established. In Herod's dungeon, cut off from the life-giving air and the desert freedom, he waited and watched.

There was no display of arms, no rending of prison doors; but the healing of the sick, the preaching of the gospel, the uplifting of men's souls, testified to Christ's mission.

Alone in the dungeon, seeing whither his path, like his Master's, tended, John accepted the trust-fellowship with Christ in sacrifice. Heaven's messengers attended him to the grave. The intelligences of the universe, fallen and unfallen, witnessed his vindication of unselfish service.

And in all the generations that have passed since then, suffering souls have been sustained by the testimony of John's life. In the dungeon, on the scaffold, in the flames, men and

women through centuries of darkness have been strengthened by the memory of him of whom Christ declared, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater." Matthew 11:11.

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah;... and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

"Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Hebrews 11:32-40. —*Education*, pp. 154-158. **SW**

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The healing of the sick, the preaching of the gospel, the uplifting of men's souls, testified to Christ's mission.

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"The theme of redemption will bear the most concentrated study, and its depth will never be fully explored. You need not fear that you will exhaust this wonderful theme. Drink deep of the well of salvation. Go to the fountain for yourself, that you may be filled with refreshment, that Jesus may be in you a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life." —*Christian Education*, pp. 119, 120.

# The Struggle for Freedom



Compiled by  
Larry Watts  
from writings by  
Ellet J. Waggoner and  
Ellen G. White

*"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans 7:1-7.*

## A striking illustration

**The illustration:** It is a very simple one and one which everyone can understand. The law of God says of man and woman: "They two shall be one flesh." It is adultery for either one to be married to another while the other is living. The law will not sanction such a union.

For reasons that will appear later, the illustration cites only the case of a woman leaving her husband. The law unites them. That law holds the woman to the man as long as he lives. If while her husband lives she shall be united to another man, she will find herself under the condemnation of the law. But if her husband dies, she may be united to another, and be perfectly free from any condemnation.

The woman is then "free from the law," although the law has not changed in one particular. Least of all has it been abolished; for the same law that bound her to the first husband and which condemned her for uniting with another in his lifetime, now unites her to another and binds her to him as closely as it did to the first. If we hold to this simple illustration, we shall have no difficulty with what follows.

**The application:** As in the illustration there are four subjects, *the law, the woman, the first husband, and the second husband*, so also in the application. We are represented as the woman. This is clear from the statement that we are "married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead," which is Christ. He therefore is the second husband. The first husband is indicated in verse 5: "When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Death is the fruit of sin. The first husband, therefore, was the flesh, or "the body of sin."

**"Dead to the law":** This is the expression that troubles so many. There is nothing troublesome in it, if we but keep in mind the illustration and the nature of the parties to this transaction. Why are we dead to the law? In order that we might be married to another. But how is it that we become dead in order to be married to another? In the illustration, it is the first husband that dies before

the woman may be married to another. Even so it is here, as we shall see.

**"One flesh."** The law of marriage is that the two parties to it "shall be one flesh." How is it in this case? The first husband is the flesh, the body of sin. Well, we were truly one flesh with that. We were by nature perfectly united to sin. It was our life. It controlled us. Whatever sin devised, that we did. We might have done it unwillingly at times, but we did it nevertheless. Sin reigned in our mortal bodies, so that we obeyed it in the lusts thereof. Whatever sin wished, was law to us. We were one flesh.

**Seeking a divorce:** There comes a time in our experience when we wish to be free from sin. It is when we see something of the beauty of holiness. With some people the desire is only occasional; with others it is more constant. Whether they recognize the fact or not, it is Christ appealing to them to forsake sin, and to be joined to Him, to live with Him. And so they endeavor to effect a separation. But sin will not consent. In spite of all that we can do, it still clings to us. We are "one flesh," and it is a union for life since it is a union of our life to sin. There is no divorce in that marriage.

**Freedom in death:** There is no hope of effecting a separation from sin by any ordinary means. No matter how much we may desire to be united to Christ, it cannot be done while we are joined to sin; for the law will not sanction such a union, and Christ will not enter into any union that is not lawful.

If we could only get sin to die, we should be free, but it will not die. There is only one way for us to be freed from the hateful union, and that is for us to die. If we wish freedom so much that we are willing [*for self*] to be crucified, then it may be done. In death the separation is effected; for it is by the body of Christ that "we" become dead. We are crucified with Him. The body of sin is also crucified. But while the body of sin is destroyed, we have a resurrection in Christ. The same thing that frees us from the first husband unites us to the second.

**A new creature:** Now we see how it is that we are dead to the law. We died in Christ, and were raised in Him. But "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away;

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There is no hope of effecting a separation from sin by any ordinary means.

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behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." 2 Corinthians 5:17, 18. Now we may be united to Christ, and the law will witness to the union, and sanction it. For not only is the first husband dead, but we also died, so that, although alive, we are not the same creature that we were before. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Galatians 2:20. We are one. The same law that formerly declared us to be sinners now binds us to Christ. —*Signs of the Times*, April 16, 1896.

### Statements from Ellen G. White

**Paul's marvelous change:** "Paul says that 'as touching the law'—as far as outward acts were concerned—he was 'blameless,' but when the spiritual character of the law was discerned, when he looked into the holy mirror, he saw himself a sinner. Judged by a human standard, he had abstained from sin, but when he looked into the depths of God's law, and saw himself as God saw him, he bowed in humiliation, and confessed his guilt. He did not go away from the mirror and forget what manner of man he was, but he exercised genuine repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He was washed, he was cleansed. He says, 'I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.'

"Sin then appeared in its true hideousness, and his self-esteem was gone. He became humble. He no longer ascribed goodness and merit to himself. He ceased to think more highly of himself than he ought, and he ascribed all the glory to God. He was no longer ambitious for greatness. He ceased to want to avenge himself, and was no longer sensitive to reproach, neglect, or contempt. He no longer sought earthly alliance, station, or honor. He did not pull others down to uplift himself. He became gentle, condescending, meek, and lowly of heart, because he had learned his lesson in the school of Christ. He talked of Jesus and His matchless love, and grew more and more into His image. He bent his

whole energy to win souls to Christ. When trial came upon him because of his unselfish labor for souls, he bowed in prayer, and his love for them increased. His life was hid with Christ in God, and he loved Jesus with all the ardor of his nature. Every church was dear to him; every church member was a person of interest to him; for he looked upon every soul as the purchase of the blood of Christ. —(*Review and Herald*, July 22, 1890)...

**"God's law did not die:** The apostle Paul, in relating his experience, presents an important truth concerning the work to be wrought in conversion. He says, 'I was alive without the law once'—he felt no condemnation; 'but when the commandment came,' when the law of God was urged upon his conscience, 'sin revived, and I died.' Then he saw himself a sinner, condemned by the divine law. Mark, it was Paul, and not the law, that died. —(*Spirit of Prophecy*, book 4, p. 297)...

**"The law holds its dignity:** Through the plan of salvation the law holds its dignity in condemning the sinner, and the sinner can be saved through the propitiation of Christ for our sins, 'in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.' The law is not changed in any particular to meet man in his fallen condition. It remains what it ever has been—holy, just, and good." —(*Review and Herald*, May 23, 1899) *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1076.

### E.J. Waggoner continues

**A different service:** Now that the union with Christ has been effected, we serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. In marriage, the woman is to be subject to the husband. So when we were united to sin, we were in all things subject to sin. For a time it was willing service; but when we saw the Lord, and were drawn to Him, the service became irksome. We tried to keep God's law, but were bound, and could not. But now we are set free. Sin no longer restrains us, and our service is freedom. We gladly render to Christ all the service that the law requires of us. We render this service because of the perfect union between us. His life

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Now that the union with Christ has been effected, we serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

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is ours, since we were raised only by the power of His life. Therefore our obedience is simply His loyalty and faithfulness in us.

**Sin by the law:** The apostle says that when we were in the flesh, “the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Far from it. The law is righteousness. But it is only by the law that sin is known. “Sin is not imputed when there is no law.” “The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.” 1 Corinthians 15:56. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” So there can be no sin but by the law. But the law is not sin; for if it were, it would not reprove sin. To convince of sin is the work of the Spirit of God, and not of Satan. He would make us believe that sin is right.

**“Thou shalt not covet.”** It once seemed very strange that the apostle should have quoted only this one commandment as the one that convicted him of sin. But the reason is plain. It was because this one includes every other. We learn (Colossians 3:5) that covetousness is idolatry. Thus the law ends just where it begins. It is a complete circle, including every duty of every person in the universe. “I had not known lust,” or unlawful desire, “except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Now lust is the beginning of every sin, for “when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.” James 1:15. And sin is the transgression of the law. But the tenth commandment is that one which forbids lust or unlawful desire. Therefore, if it is perfectly kept, all the others must be. And if it is not kept, no part of the law is kept. So we see that in quoting the tenth commandment as that which convinced him of sin, the apostle really included the whole law.... —*Signs of the Times*, April 19, 1896.

### The law of sin

**Sin personified** [See Romans 7:8-25 quoted at right]: It will be noticed that in this entire chapter sin is represented as a person. It is the first husband to which we are united. But the union has become distasteful, because, having seen Christ and having been drawn to Him by His love, we have seen that we were joined to a monster. The marriage bond has become a galling yoke, and

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*“But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” Romans 7:8-25.*

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The blessing is pronounced upon those who do His commandments, and not upon those who wish to do them, or who even try to do them.

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our whole thought is how to get away from the monster to which we are united and which is dragging us down to a certain death. The picture presented in this chapter is one of the most vivid in the whole Bible.

**The strength of sin:** "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." 1 Corinthians 15:56. "Without the law sin was dead." "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." "Where no law is, there is no transgression." So it is that "sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." Sin is simply the law transgressed, "for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Sin has no strength, therefore, except that which it gets from the law. The law is not sin, and yet it binds us to sin, that is, the law witnesses to the sin and will not grant us any escape, simply because it cannot bear false witness.

**The law of life, and the law of death:** "The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." The law of God is the life of God. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:48. His life is the rule for all His creatures. Those in whom the life of God is made perfectly manifest, keep His law. It is very evident therefore that the design of the law is life, since it is life itself. But the opposite of life is death. Therefore when the law is transgressed, it is death to the transgressor....

**The law cleared:** The law pointed out the fact that sin was killing us. "Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." We have no more reason to rail at the law than we have to hate the man who tells us that the substance which we are eating, thinking it to be food, is poison. He is our friend. He would not be our friend if he did not show us our danger. The fact that he is not able to heal the illness that the poison already eaten has caused does not make him any the less our friend. He has warned us of our danger, and we can now get help from the physician. And so, after all, the law itself was not death to us, but its office was "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

**"The law is spiritual":** "For we know that the law is spiritual." If this fact were more generally

recognized, there would be much less religious legislation among so-called Christian nations. People would not try to enforce the commandments of God. Since the law is spiritual, it can be obeyed only by the power of the Spirit of God. "God is Spirit" (John 4:24); therefore the law is the nature of God. Spiritual is opposed to carnal, or fleshly. Thus it is that the man who is in the flesh cannot please God....

**Convicted, but not converted:** "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good." The fact that we do not wish to do the sins that we are committing shows that we acknowledge the righteousness of the law, which forbids them. But conviction is not conversion, although a very necessary step to that condition. It is not enough to wish to do right. The blessing is pronounced upon those who do His commandments, and not upon those who wish to do them, or who even try to do them. Indeed, if there were no higher position for a professed follower of the Lord than that described in these verses, he would be in a far worse condition than the careless sinner. Both are slaves, only the latter is so hardened that he finds pleasure in his slavery.

Now if one must all his life be a slave, it is better for him to be unconscious of his bondage than to be continually fretting over it. But there is something better; therefore it is a blessing that we are convicted of sin, and that our slavery is thereby made as disagreeable as possible.

**Two laws:** "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Compare this with verse 5.

Remember also that all this is written to them that know the law. It is not addressed to the heathen who have not the law, but to those who profess to know God. While knowing the law, we are united in marriage to sin. This sin is in our flesh, since they who are married are one flesh. It is the law that witnesses to the fact that we are sinners, and that will not grant us any escape from it. But we are slaves. Whosoever commits sin is the slave of sin. John 8:34. Therefore it is that the law that will not let us be anything but

what we are, is really holding us in bondage. While we are in that condition, it is not to us a law of liberty.

**A body of death:** We are joined in marriage to sin. But sin has in it death; for “the sting of death is sin.” Sin is that with which death kills us. Therefore the body of sin, to which we are joined when in the flesh, is but a body of death. What a terrible condition! Joined in such close union that we are one flesh with that which is in itself death. A living death!

And “the strength of sin is the law.” It witnesses to our union, and thus holds us in that bondage of death. If there were no hope of escape, we might curse the law for not allowing us to die in ignorance. But although the law seems to be pitiless, it is nevertheless our best friend. It holds us to a sense of the dreadfulness of our bondage until in anguish we cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” We must be delivered, or we perish....

**A divided man:** “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” That is, of course, while in the condition described in the preceding verses. In purpose he serves the law of God, but in actual practice he serves the law of sin. As described in another place, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye can not do the things that ye would.” Galatians 5:17.

It is not a state of actual service to God, because we read in our next chapter that “they that are in the flesh can not please God.” It is a state from which one may well pray to be delivered, so that he can serve the Lord not merely with the mind, but with his whole being. “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24. —*Signs of the Times*, April 23, 1896. **SW**

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Although the law seems to be pitiless, it is nevertheless our best friend. It holds us to a sense of the dreadfulness of our bondage until in anguish we cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” We must be delivered, or we perish.

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# Finding Contentment in This Life

By John Theodorou



Contentment means freedom from agitation and anxieties, having our desires limited to the things that we have, being satisfied with food that God gives us. “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5.

The horse that does not worry will endure much more hard work than the fiery steed. The ox that contentedly chews its cud as he bears the yoke will do more and better work than the one that frets. So it is with the people of God; some endure, others do not; some work, others do not.

The one who calmly trusts his Lord in adversity as well as in prosperity will find himself making progress in the Master’s work. There is no reason why we cannot trust God, because He has given us nothing but good all the days of our life. We are to count our blessings.

Yes, even those who seem to be against us work for the good, as in the case of Jacob when he thought himself to be bereft of his children. The promise always holds true, “All things work together for good to them that love God.” Romans 8:28. Do you love God? Then claim the promise! Submit all to Him, knowing that He does not err. Sometimes it is necessary to turn our eyes away from the things that are seen, which are temporary, to the things of God, which are eternal. The Lord is preparing us for the “Eternal weight of glory.” 2 Corinthians 4:17. Therefore, let Him work in us, “To will and to do of His good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13.

The apostle Paul seems to have had as much sufferings as any of God’s servants, yet he says,

“I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” Philippians 4:11. The apostle Paul and Silas, having been lacerated with forty stripes save one, lying upon their bleeding backs with their feet elevated and fastened in stocks, still praised God.

But the physical suffering is not always the hardest to endure. No doubt Paul’s perils caused by false brethren gave him greater anguish than did the stoning by open enemies. But even this he accepted without complaint by the grace of God. By these trials the child of God is made christlike.

The patriarch Job, a perfect, upright man, endured extreme suffering, the same that the enemy wants to bring upon the children of God. Yet Job said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” Job 13:15. Passing out of the crucible of fire, he found himself in a sacred nearness to God. He said, “Now mine eyes seeth Thee.” Job 42:5.

Thank God that we can also follow in the footsteps of the Lord and be made perfect through sufferings. “Godliness with contentment is great gain.” 1 Timothy 6:6. Then, how does one find contentment? To be happy in this life, we must strive to attain to the character of Christ.

“One marked peculiarity of Christ was His self-denial and benevolence. He came not to seek His own. He went about doing good, and this was His meat and drink. We may, by following the example of the Saviour, be in holy communion with Him, and by daily seeking to imitate His character and follow His example, we shall be a blessing to the world and shall secure for ourselves contentment here and an eternal reward hereafter.” —*Testimonies of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 227. **SW**

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“He came not to seek His own. He went about doing good, and this was His meat and drink.”

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## *Spirit of prophecy credibility— amalgamation*

**Q** There are some controversies in the Jamaican society regarding the writings of Sister Ellen G. White. I would like others' perspectives on the following statement: "Every species of animal which God had created were preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation, were destroyed by the flood. Since the flood there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men."

Let me hasten to say that the controversies are not in our church but in the society as a whole, because a Seventh-day Adventist went on national television to denounce Sister White as a false prophet. He used statements like the above to make his arguments, so, everywhere you go, people are asking questions. May God be with you. —GG

**A** In the end of time, "the very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God.... Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony." —(Letter 12, 1890) *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 48.

"There is safety alone in taking the Scriptures as our rule of life, and as the test of our doctrines. Martin Luther exclaimed, 'The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the foundation of our faith!' Our work is to hold up the law of God; for Christ has said that 'it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail.' He has said,

'Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.'" —*Signs of the Times*, April 22, 1889.

"The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days, that 'the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.' 2 Timothy 4:3. That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love.

"But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord' in its support." —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 594, 595.

As a denomination, we believe that present truth and the everlasting gospel encompass "the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven," "the first and second angels," "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," "the temple of God ... in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God," "the Sabbath of the fourth commandment," and "the non-immortality of the wicked" (see *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 30), because the Bible says so, not because Sister White says so.

The foundation of our doctrines is a "thus saith the Lord." We hold "the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms." —*The Great Controversy*,

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The foundation of  
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We should never  
resort to cheap  
methods to defend  
the truth.

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p. 595. This is a quotation from Sister Ellen G. White not to bolster the Bible, but because it is nevertheless true. We defend present truth by using the everlasting word of God, the Bible. It is the final authority. To defend the Scriptures by quoting human writers is to place that writer's words above God's holy word. But to quote from others who support the Scriptures diminishes neither the Bible nor the source that is quoted.

However, another thought is important here. While desiring to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15), we should never resort to cheap methods to defend the truth, for "caviling, ridicule, and misrepresentation can be indulged in only at the expense of the debasement of [our] own souls. The use of such weapons does not gain precious victories for you, but rather cheapens the mind and separates the soul from God." —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 466.

### The amalgamation statements

Following is a short explanation on the Ellen G. White "amalgamation of man and beast" statement. A fuller explanation and defense of that phrase can be found on the E.G. White CD-ROM under "Ellen G. White Estate Research Documents," article "Amalgamation" and at <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/amalg.html>.

The apologetic presented here uses a small part of that article along with a few additional ideas and thoughts.

The statements under attack are only two and are originally found in one book—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3 (republished in *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, in 1870). In chapter 6, "Crime Before the Flood," we find the first one:

"But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere. God purposed to destroy by a flood that powerful, long-lived race that had corrupted their ways before Him." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 64.

And in Chapter 7, "The Flood," of the same book we find the second:

"Every species of animal which God had created were preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation, were destroyed by the Flood. Since the Flood there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men." *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Exactly what is meant by "amalgamation of man and beast" would normally be our first question; but because detractors are seeking first to disparage, we begin by addressing the spirit and methods of the attack.

When analyzing any argument, this one included, we need to begin by asking: "What is the viewpoint of the writer?" By "viewpoint" we mean at least two things: (1) What was the context of the statement in time, and (2) what was (or is) the worldview of the writer?

**Context** has to do with three things: (a) the specific meaning of the words in the time in which they were written, (b) the place of the statement in the larger context of the article or publication, and (c) the generally accepted practices of authors in the time and within the community in which they lived. (This last point will not be addressed here.)

By **worldview** we mean, What is (or are) the writer's *a priori* assumption(s)? An "*a priori* assumption" is an one made "relating to or denoting reasoning or knowledge that proceeds from theoretical deduction rather than from observation or experience." —[http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american\\_english/a-priori](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/a-priori). More specifically, it is "an **assumption** that is true without further proof or need to prove it. It is **assumed** the sun will come up tomorrow." —<http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/a-priori+assumption>. Assumptions determine what "facts" are allowed in any discussion or argument, and they often define the conclusions from the start.

Assuming the above to be true, it can be deducted that the critics of E.G. White have failed in every point. They have (a) defined "amalgamation" as bestiality (the cohabitation of humans and animals) and then assumed that Sister White meant that different races of men have resulted from the offspring of that cohabitation.

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(1) What was the  
context of the  
statement in time,  
and (2) what was (or  
is) the worldview of  
the writer?

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First, “no dictionaries we have had access to, not even the exhaustive *Oxford English Dictionary*, indicate that the term has ever been used to describe this act.... In the mid-nineteenth century the word was commonly employed in the United States to describe the intermarriage of the white and the Negro race.

“The long-established meaning of the key word ‘amalgamation’ as the blending of races should weigh heavily in determining the interpretation of the questioned passages.

“Second, the whole tenor of Mrs. White’s writings provides strong testimony against the claim that she is here seeking solemnly to present as fact some ancient stories about abnormal man-beast progeny. Her writings are not tainted with fanciful fables of the long ago. Rather, they have a strongly matter-of-fact quality to them. If she had been a dreamer and visionary, how frequently might she have regaled her readers with myths and weird stories of antiquity.” —*Amalgamation*, pp. 2, 3, E.G. White CD-ROM (Adapted from Francis D. Nichol’s book *Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, pp. 306-322).

In addition, the “amalgamation” passages do not say “amalgamation of man **with** beast,” and in a construction like this the preposition “of” need not be repeated to be clearly implied. With this simple and consistent understanding of the passage, we see that the passage in the context of the writer’s understanding of the word and its use in that time, is speaking of the amalgamation of different races of mankind and the amalgamation of different kinds of animals. The grammatical construction and common usage permit us to understand “of,” not “with,” as being implied.

And, yes, according to the Bible (and the understanding of the writer) there were two different races of men before the flood: one race, from Cain, called the children of men, and the other race, from Shem, called the children of God. The Bible links the intermingling (amalgamation) of the two races with God’s decision to destroy the world as it had become.

Genesis 6:4-7 reads: “... When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And

God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. 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.”

## Conclusion

For a more extensive explanation of this issue, refer to the references noted above. However, with the arguments presented here it should be easy enough to give an answer in meekness and fear to those who are willing to receive one. For those whose purpose is “to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony,” no explanation will be possible. Even the Spirit of God cannot move the unwilling, but who are we to judge another’s motives? We are to sow beside all waters and leave the results with God, trusting that “we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.” 2 Corinthians 13:8.

We pray that this explanation will bless honest seekers and that the references noted will prove a worthy resource for those needing more. Until next time, God keep you and bless you through every circumstance, and may the Bible and testimonies be your song and shield. **SW**

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We are to sow beside all waters and leave the results with God.

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# Small Cause, Big Effect

*By Manuela Di Franca*

One day I was on the train returning to my home in Ansbach, Germany, and there was a woman sitting on the seat facing me. I noticed her eyes filling with tears as she observed some children playing in the car. For a moment, I struggled with myself as to whether to say something or not, but it became quite clear to me that I couldn't just look the other way.

I asked if I could help her, but she just shook her head. I had a deep desire in my heart to comfort her, so I moved to sit next to her and hugged her.

I knew this was kind of unusual, because we were strangers! The woman was deeply moved by this gesture. Thanking me several times, she commented that she'd never experienced such warmth and compassion from someone she'd never met.

As I listened, she told me her story. She was living separate from her husband and was allowed to visit her children only every two weeks. Every time she saw children playing and laughing, she was reminded of her sorrow. I reassured her that there was always a ray of hope despite all the trouble. Soon I started talking about God and the power of prayer. Her face

lit up, and she told me that she believed in God and was praying every day as well.

Soon we arrived at the terminal stop and went our separate ways. Before saying good-bye, she expressed her gratitude again: "You must be sent from Above!"

Some time later, I happened to meet this woman again, and she assured me that she hadn't forgotten me and my words. Some months passed before we met again on the train. Overjoyed, she told me that the custody of her children had been awarded to her and they were now living with her!

But the story doesn't end there. To earn some money every now and then, I work as a hostess at the fair and exhibition center in Nürnberg. In July 2009, I was working at a European Economic Congress and was in charge of the VIP lounge. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the very same lady sitting there! It turned out that she is the personal interpreter of the Romanian Secretary of Commerce. She recognized me right away and gave me a warm smile!

This experience showed me that sometimes just a small gesture in life can have great effect! **SW**



*Baptism in Jamaica*

## Report from Jamaica

*"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Romans 8:17.*

"All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them. They are baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They pledge themselves to become active members of His church in the earth. They are to be dead to all the allurements of worldly desires; but in conversation and godliness, they are, through sanctification of the

Spirit to exert a living influence for God.

"'Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ'—what an exalted, dignified position! Separate and distinct from the world, secure from the wily snares of Satan! By their baptismal vows, God's professed followers have pledged themselves to stand in opposition to evil. The enemy of souls will work with all craft to corrupt their minds. He will seek to introduce his methods into their service for the Master. But there is safety for them if they will heed the injunction: '... Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.'" —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 15.

On Sabbath, July 20, 2013, believers as well as family members and friends from different churches in Jamaica gathered at the Annotto Bay church for a spiritual feast.

The day was filled with activities that blessed the hearts of those who attended. We had the Sabbath school (conducted by the youth) and other events, including a baptismal service, communion service, and Bible class.

But the highlight of the day was when two sisters, Meshana Lecky and Yvonne Hartley, made their covenant with the Lord through baptism in the sea. We were delighted to welcome these precious souls into the church of God and prayed that the Lord will continue to be with them.

May the Lord bless us always.

—George Gowie

## News from Cape Verde

Pastor Juan Manuel Ramirez, from Mexico, spent time in Cape Verde from June to August 2013, trying to continue the work done earlier by Brother Helmer Tapia (from Peru). Pastor German Aldana (from Mexico, now working in Portugal) was with him part of the time.

Cape Verde is a very difficult field. It is an island nation spanning ten islands 350 miles from west Africa in the Atlantic Ocean. The population of about .5 million is mostly Creole, and Portuguese is the official language.

Brother Ramirez wrote the following note: "Brethren, grace and peace be with you. Here I send my report and some pictures of people who have met with us on Sabbath. Let us continue to pray that the work in Cape Verde may advance and be established. Greetings, and God bless you."

## Good news from North India

Jesus said, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16.

One day as I was just walking down a road, I met a man who was a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As we were speaking, he told me that he was trying to be a vegetarian and also trying to keep the Sabbath better.



*These souls met together in Cape Verde during Pastor Ramirez's visit*



*The three adults above were baptized in North India*

I presented some very simple things to him about the Reform-mation.

Then, on another day, I saw him on the street again, and he turned to greet me. I invited him to come and visit me in my home, and he accepted the invitation.

As he visited with our family, my wife and I presented some basic differences of the Reform Movement and the Adventist Church. He listened very carefully and was quite interested to hear what we had to say about the church. He told me that the Reform Movement holds the truth.

His family attended the church services on three successive Sabbaths. Seeing their interest, I offered to give them Bible studies concerning the basic truths of the faith.

After completing the Bible studies, three people in the family decided to be baptized. The sacred service was held on Sunday, July 28, 2013.

We thank the Lord for adding these three precious souls to His kingdom. May God bless them in their walk with Him!

—Crosswell Rimsu

## Myanmar greetings

Greetings in Jesus' name!

Praise God for His mighty deeds.

I just returned home from Matupi, and our brothers and sisters there are fine. We were so happy in studying the Bible together. Even though I spent only a few days there, we studied day and night and enjoyed it very much.

The Lord added three souls to his church. I have attached some pictures of the various activities. The believers look young, but they are of mature age. Please



*Believers in Matupi, Myanmar*

keep praying for them, for the church in Matupi is under pressure and difficult temptation. By the grace of God the members are strong and healthy in the faith. All the members are active and united in the present truth and the Lord.

May the peace and joy of the Lord be upon you always!

—Suan Kam Thang

## From Nigeria

Receive Christian greetings from Nigeria.

I left Nairobi early in the morning on May 17, 2013, aboard Ethiopian Airlines after purchasing a return ticket. My program remains the same as approved by the General Conference, except that I omitted Cameroon, since you had already assigned another brother to go there.

My first Sabbath, May 18, was spent in Lagos with a group of our believers. They are few but enthusiastic. We had successful Bible studies on Sabbath afternoon and Sunday morning. Their challenge is to find a place of worship if they are to grow, since as they evangelize they need to direct interested souls to our location. They are presently wor-

shipping in a place owned by a man who is not our member and has given them notice to leave.

Tomorrow I will meet Brother. Christian Danboyi, the Nigerian Field Leader, who is coming to Lagos to meet me from Jos. We will discuss the progress and needs of Nigeria. He has a desire for me to meet the new souls in Jos and Delta State and to encourage them, as they have requested as new members; but my financial ability is limited, having already spent funds for an airline ticket and other expenses. Kindly assist me here in Nigeria to accomplish my missionary visit with US \$400. The distances are far apart; and once one is in Nigeria, it is better to do a thorough work of visiting the souls than to come again for this purpose.

I will update you as I travel. Kindly instruct me if there is anything you would like done before I leave Nigeria, since I am already here.

Next week I will leave for Benin for one week, then Togo for one week, and last Ghana. I will return to Nairobi on June 26, per our first plan.

May I know the plans of the General Conference for the missionary school in Ghana. We are ready to assist in the plans to make it succeed in the shortest possible time by recommending some of the BAM! graduates who are West Africans and live not far from the school. Some of them may also serve as instructors. We will provide any assistance that we can.

—Sevith Moyo

Greetings from Nigeria. Following is a brief summary of the visit of Pastor Sevith Moyo and Elder Christian Danboyi to Delta State, Nigeria.

Dearly beloved, Greetings with Philippians 4:8: "Finally, breth-

ren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

The visit of these brethren brought to mind the net that gathered in different fish in the time of the apostles. Brethren from Imo State, Asaba, Abavo, and Ekuku Agbor assembled at the Ekuku church. A total of 31 adults and children were present. It was a time to delight in God's presence with moral instruction, Bible teaching, and do's and don't's.

Worship was combined with health talks and treatment of the sick by Brother Christian. Questions asked by the believers were answered.

Finally Brother Ikokoh Moses was ordained as a local church elder on Sabbath afternoon, May 25.

Thanks to God our Father, to the General Conference, to the Nigerian Field, and to Pastor Moyo, through whom God has made this dream a reality.

Remain in the joy of the Lord.

—Ikokoh Moses

## Conferences in Philippines

Warm Christian greetings, and peace in the name of Jesus.

Attached are pictures of the Visayan Field Conference Youth camp meeting along the sea-shore in Barangay Palje Romblon, Romblon, on April 7-14, 2013, with our guest from the General Conference, Youth Department Leader Pastor Joel Barnedo.

It was successful and a great blessing for the cause of God, for we were able to baptize eight young people in a very isolated island. We needed to travel for three days by land and sea from our office to reach the place. The distance made it difficult for other young people to attend, for financial reasons.

Even though the youth were busy during the days' activities, they helped a lot with the nightly public evangelism in the Barangay open basketball court, where we preached the gospel in this isolated island. Seeds were sown for the advancement of the heavenly kingdom.

—Jerson Galicia



*These young people were baptized in Barangay Palje Romblon, Romblon*



*Attendees at the Mindanao Youth Conference in June*



*Pastor Larry Watts with workers at a seminar in Accra, Ghana*

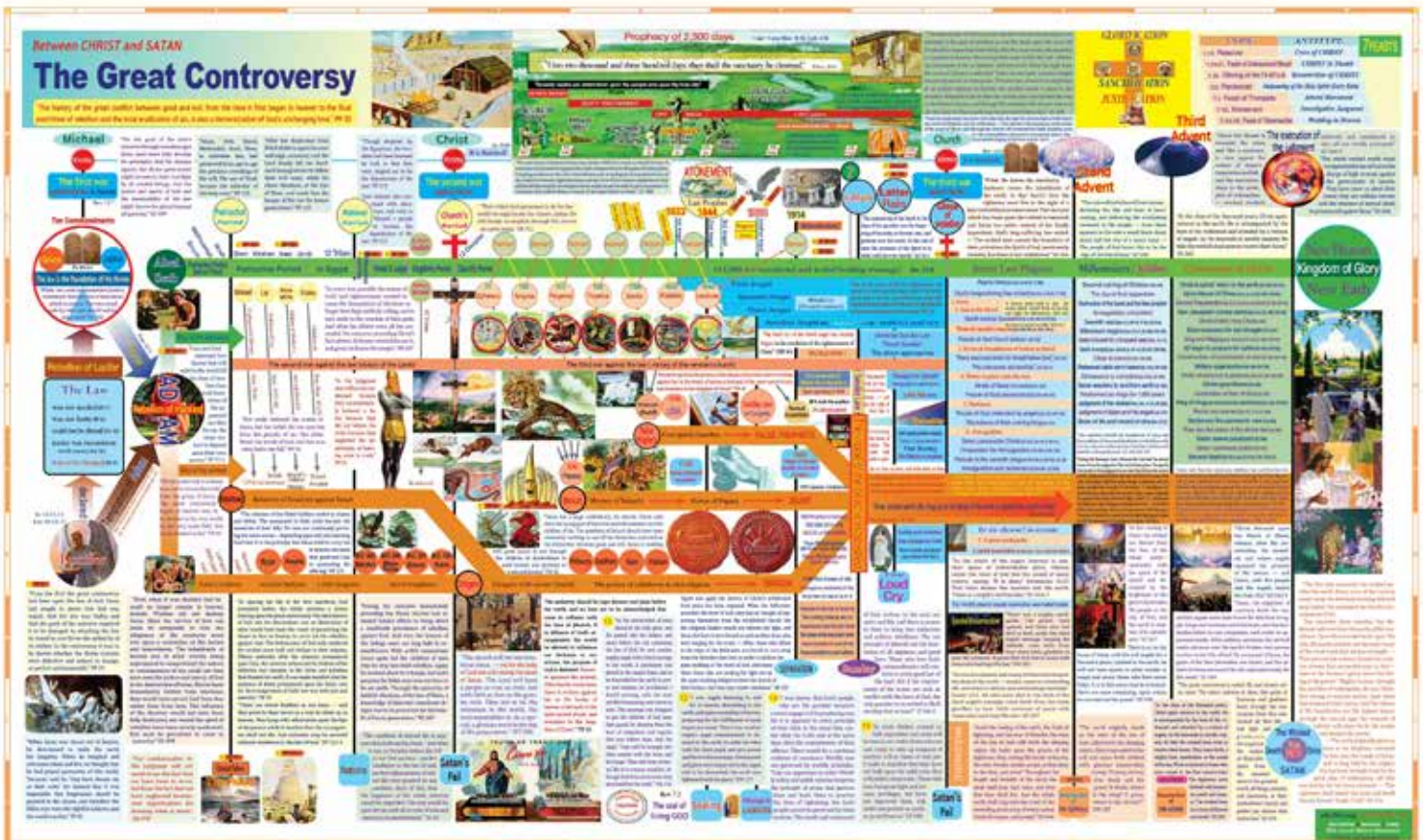


*Workers, members, and interested souls in Kumasi, Ghana*

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