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# Nearer My God to Thee

**N**ow is our time to work. We are to win souls, not drive them. We are to persuade them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. Personal labor is needed, visiting from house to house, opening the Scriptures to them who do not comprehend them. The Lord Jesus calls for soul winners, and those who go forth to gather the sheaves should have the prayers of the whole church, that they may go as sharp sickles into the harvest field. There are more sheaves to gather in than we can possibly know now. Laborers for God, those who travail for souls, are few.

"The Holy Spirit, attending the worker together with God, enables him to gather in the sheaves. It is not learned men, not eloquent men, who are to be depended upon to do the work now needed, but humble men, who are learned in the school of Christ, who are meek and lowly in heart, who will give the invitation to the supper, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' Luke 14:17. Those who beg at midnight for loaves to feed the hungry souls, will be successful. The law of God is that as we receive we are to impart. All the churches in our land need the self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit of Christ. God's people are no

longer to continue in sin, they are to lay hold of the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. If human hands have never been laid upon them in ordination, there is One who will give fitness for the work if they ask for it in faith. In the name of the Lord I entreat you, Ask and receive the Holy Spirit. But this Spirit can only be received by those who are consecrated, who will deny self, lifting the cross and following the Lord.

"Who will be on the Lord's side? . . . We need bold, sanctified soldiers, men who have purity of knowledge because they are doers of the Word. They will be able to see what must be done to gain life, life, eternal life. We must have purity of character. This is now, as it ever has been, our only safeguard in the formation of character. As we walk in close companionship with Christ, we shall be brought into conformity with the divine likeness. 'Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee, e'en though it be a cross that raiseth me.' In Christ is our completeness. We must put away sin, or we are worthless servants. We are to endure the seeing of Him who is invisible. We must raise the standard of character, or we shall never see God." – *Letter 10, 1899*

*Ellen G. White*



# How long halt ye

**E**lijah's message to Israel was, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" The Israelites were the church of God at the time. They had halted between two opinions. These same two opinions have existed since sin entered into the world. Adam and Eve halted between these two opinions. They did not reject God completely, but they tried to serve two masters.

These two opinions have divided our world into two companies. In the time of Noah, the rest of the world held a different opinion than Noah and his family. The world considered Noah foolish, whereas Noah considered the rest of the world foolish. Which one was truly foolish?

There are people to whom God's truth and opinions are foolishness. Consider the following verses:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Romans 1:22

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." 1 Corinthians 3:19

Then there is one class of people who are in between. They halt between two opinions. One time they lean one way; then the next time, they lean the other way. They are the most foolish of all. God said to this class of people, "I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,

I will spue thee out of My mouth." Revelation 3:15-16. Being lukewarm is the worst condition to be in.

How is it with us? Have we been halting between two opinions?

The history of the Israelite people was a continual halting between two opinions. At one time they said, "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do." Exodus 19:8. We will be obedient, we will serve the Lord. The next time, they murmured against the Lord and His leading, turned away from Him and served idols. And so throughout the ages, these two opinions remain. Still today people are halting between them, taking sides, making decisions.

What are these two opinions?

Elijah gave the people a choice. "And Elijah came unto all the

A photograph of a person with a backpack walking on a dirt path through a dense forest. The path is covered in fallen leaves and the trees are tall and thin. The lighting is soft, suggesting a shaded forest environment.

# *Between Two Opinions?*

*Adapted from a sermon by Timo Martin*

people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." 1 Kings 18:21. We either follow the Lord, or we follow Satan, the world, and sin.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. . . And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10:27, 5. Jesus' sheep recognize His voice, and they will not follow a stranger. Who are these strangers? They are the voice of Satan and his followers.

In the last days there will be people who follow Jesus. "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb wither-

soever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." Revelation 14:4

Why are there so few that follow Jesus wherever He goes? Out of over two billion Christians, only 144,000 will follow Him. It is because it requires something of them that they do not want to give. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matthew 16:24

God could have made the way to heaven easier. He could have given His people luxuries, comforts, and an easy life. He could have sent Jesus into the world from the family of a High Priest, a wealthy family, and given His disciples riches and recognition. But in His

wisdom, God sent His Son from a poor family, from the ill-famed Nazareth. Having nothing earthly to offer. However, He offered them something far greater—the truth. To follow Jesus at that time was hard. The places where He went among the poor, to the lepers, the blind and the lame. In the wilderness, in the mountains.

Today, following Jesus is not any easier. Few are willing to follow Jesus, to go where He goes. "Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour." John 1:38–39

*My sheep hear My voice,  
and I know them,  
and they follow Me.*

*John 10:27*



Many are not seeking where to find Jesus, but expect that He follows them wherever they go. You lose the company of Jesus if you are not going where He goes. Jesus comes to Sabbath School and to the divine service. How about to afternoon meetings? Prayer meetings? Would Jesus go to these meetings? If we are purposely staying home, do we have His company? If you decide to sleep on Sabbath afternoon, will Jesus join you? If you waste time in idleness, in watching worldly shows, spending time on Social Media, will Jesus be watching with you? If you put on worldly music, will He listen to the music with you? If you go to places of entertainment, you must go alone. Jesus will not enter in with you. And when you come out, is Jesus waiting for you outside? No. He has left, and you must seek Him earnestly to find Him again.

We all are seeking happiness. However, there are two different opinions on how to find it. The world tells us that happiness is found in parties, good company, eating, drinking, luxuries, entertainment, and in riches.

What does Jesus tell us? Jesus says that we must deny ourselves and carry a cross. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." John 16:33. "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." John 15:20. Although we will experience these things, following Him is the source of true happiness. "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." John 15:11

Is it possible to have fullness of joy without visible, worldly attractions?

"Though enemies may thrust them into prison, yet dungeon walls cannot cut off the communication between their souls and Christ. One who sees their every weakness, who is acquainted with every trial, is above all earthly powers; and angels will come to them in lonely cells, bringing light and peace from heaven. The prison will be as a palace; for the rich in faith dwell there, and the gloomy walls will be lighted up with heavenly light." *—The Great Controversy, p. 627*

The children of God need nothing more to entertain them,

than the presence of heavenly beings. This is what fullness of joy means. This is what makes religion worthwhile. This is why we serve God. Yet, there are still Christians who halt between two opinions. They also seek joy and entertainment from the world. However, they will lose the joy in the Lord and will end in misery.

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his hand in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he

is comforted, and thou art tormented." Luke 16:20–25

Who was the fool and who was the wise? The rich man or Lazarus?

Cain or Abel? Who was the fool and who was the wise? Cain lived, yet Abel died. Who had the better future? Who was wiser?

There are only two opinions. The world is divided on these ideas and outlooks on life. How many children, teenagers, and even older ones become fools, thinking themselves wise, hoping to have both worlds, enjoying life here in sin and carelessness, and hoping to reach heaven also. What a terrible mistake they make. They forget that they are dealing with God, not with man.

In giving money to God, to His church, some may say, "it is lost." Others say, "It is in the bank of heaven, and will be returned to us many fold. Who is right?"

With missionary work, some say, "It is time wasted." Others say, "This is time well spent, for the best possible purpose."

In health reform, some say, "Why does it matter what we eat or drink?" Others say, "My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit."

We must always be kind, polite, and loving to everyone. The world despises this attitude. The world's opinion is, when someone hits you, hit them back twice as hard. Heaven's opinion is to suffer abuse quietly, and to love your enemies.

A careless, haphazard work is a worldly opinion. When God created this earth, everything was made perfect, even to the smallest flower, the butterfly; look under a microscope and

observe the perfect detail, the perfect order.

Sister White advises children, "Be true to home duties. Be faithful in the discharge of little responsibilities. Be a real living Christian in the home. . . . Notice for yourself if all things in your own room are spotless and in order, that nothing there may be an offense to God, but that when holy angels shall pass through your room, they may be led to linger because attracted by the prevailing order and cleanliness. . . . You are bearing witness for Christ." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 171

When Jesus rose from the grave, He placed the cloth that was about His head, and the linens into a neat pile (John 20:27). When you get up and leave your room, be like Jesus. Lay everything neatly in its proper place, and you will have angels as your companions.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15. Love for the world will spoil a Christian's experience. Even church duties become an unpleasant task.

In everything we do or say, there are two opinions; we must either follow the one or the other. We are deciding our destiny by the opinions that we follow. Our time is almost over. Angels and the Holy Spirit are urging us on, to full surrender, while Satan is making his utmost effort to hold us back.

Some of us are becoming more spiritual, more faithful, more missionary minded, while others are losing their hold on life. Little by little they are following

the world, and are slowly separating themselves from righteousness and obedience to God.

In the world, joy is in getting more for yourself, in taking advantage of others, enjoying life to the fullest. Joy in the Lord is giving—giving to others, sacrificing for others, giving all that you have. This can include canvassing, cleaning the church, or preparing a meal for potluck lunch. You may not receive any payment for doing these things, but you will get a blessing from the Lord—happiness, holy joy, and peace, which is worth far more than all the riches in the world.

We find God's opinion in the Bible; the world's opinion is in direct opposition to the words found in His Word. Do not halt between these two opinions. Put everything on the side of God, follow the teachings of the Bible, they will never fail.

"To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 136

When many are failing, and giving up their faith, we must become more faithful, more loyal to our Master. At this moment, we have everything to gain, or everything to lose. It is singleness of purpose that will give us the victory. We can only serve one master, therefore let this Master be our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us become wise in the Lord, and not fools with the world. Amen.

# Pass me



**T**here is a well-known hymn entitled, “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour.”

*Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,  
Hear my humble cry;  
While on others Thou art calling,  
Do not pass me by.*

## **Would Jesus pass you by?**

“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Jeremiah 31:3. Would He pass you by if He loves you so much?

“Jesus knows us individually, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows us all by name. He knows the very

house in which we live, the name of each occupant.” *—The Desire of Ages, p. 479*

“Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Saviour died. The distress of every one touches His heart. The cry for aid reaches His ear. He came to draw all men unto Himself. He bids them, ‘Follow Me,’ and His Spirit moves upon their hearts to draw them to come to Him.” *—Ibid., p. 479*

But, unfortunately, “Many refuse to be drawn. Jesus knows who they are. He also knows who gladly hear His call, and are ready to come under His pastoral care. He says, ‘My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow

Me.’ He cares for each one as if there were not another on the face of the earth.” *—Ibid., p. 479*

With such great love for you, do you think He may pass you by? In the Bible we read of several instances where Jesus would have passed by, but due to the insistence of the faithful, He did not pass by.

## **ABRAHAM AND LOT**

*What was Abraham doing?* He was sitting at home, and was keeping an eye out to see what was going on around him and when he saw three weary travelers, he did not hesitate to jump up and invite them in and take care of their needs.



By Wendy Eaton (ON)

# not

"In the hot summer noontide the patriarch was sitting in his tent door, looking out over the quiet landscape, when he saw in the distance three travelers approaching. Before reaching his tent, the strangers halted, as if consulting as to their course. Without waiting for them to solicit favors, Abraham rose quickly, and as they were apparently turning in another direction, he hastened after them, and with the utmost courtesy urged them to honor him by tarrying for refreshment. With his own hands he brought water that they might wash the dust of travel from their feet. He himself selected their food, and while they were at rest under the cooling shade, an entertainment was made ready, and

he stood respectfully beside them while they partook of his hospitality. This act of courtesy God regarded of sufficient importance to record in His word; and a thousand years later it was referred to by an inspired apostle: 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.' Hebrews 13:2

"Abraham had seen in his guests only three tired wayfarers, little thinking that among them was One whom he might worship without sin." *—Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 138–139. He had no idea who these men were. Were they heathen, or followers of the Lord? Were they monarchs, rich, poor, homeless? He could have just watched

them, and decided to let them continue on their journey. What would you have done were you in his place? Would you say you are too busy with your work and family to bother? Too uncomfortable in meeting strangers? Had he not entreated them to come, what would he have missed? "But the true character of the heavenly messengers was now revealed. Though they were on their way as ministers of wrath, yet to Abraham, the man of faith, they spoke first of blessings. . . .

"Two of the heavenly messengers departed, leaving Abraham alone with Him whom he now knew to be the Son of God. And the man of faith pleaded for the inhabitants of Sodom." *—Ibid.*, p. 139

"God conferred great honor upon Abraham. Angels of heaven walked and talked with him as friend with friend." *—Ibid.*, p. 138

What an awesome privilege Abraham had. Is this same privilege offered to us?

*Lot showed similar hospitality to the angels on the streets in Sodom and was blessed.*

"Lot, Abraham's nephew, though he had made his home in Sodom, was imbued with the patriarch's spirit of kindness and hospitality" *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 342

"In the twilight two strangers drew near to the city gate. They were apparently travelers coming in to tarry for the night. None could discern in those humble wayfarers the mighty heralds of divine judgment, and little dreamed the gay, careless multitude that in their treatment of these heavenly

“My Lord, if now I have found favour in Thy sight,  
pass not away, I pray thee, from Thy servant.”

*Genesis 18:5*

messengers that very night they would reach the climax of the guilt which doomed their proud city. But there was one man who manifested kindly attention toward the strangers and invited them to his home. Lot did not know their true character, but politeness and hospitality were habitual with him; they were a part of his religion—lessons that he had learned from the example of Abraham. Had he not cultivated a spirit of courtesy, he might have been left to perish with the rest of Sodom. Many a household, in closing its doors against a stranger, has shut out God’s messenger, who would have brought blessing and hope and peace.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 158. Read that last sentence again, slowly, and think about it carefully.

Lot also had no idea who these men were, but what was his habit? “Seeing the abuse to which strangers were exposed in Sodom, Lot made it one of his duties to guard them at their entrance, by offering them entertainment at his own house. He was sitting at the gate as the travelers approached, and upon observing them, he rose from his place to meet them, and bowing courteously, said, ‘Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant’s house, and tarry all night.’ They seemed to decline his hospitality, saying, ‘Nay; but we will abide in the street.’ Their object

in this answer was twofold—to test the sincerity of Lot and also to appear ignorant of the character of the men of Sodom, as if they supposed it safe to remain in the street at night. Their answer made Lot the more determined not to leave them to the mercy of the rabble. He pressed his invitation until they yielded, and accompanied him to his house.

“He had hoped to conceal his intention from the idlers at the gate by bringing the strangers to his home by a circuitous route; but their hesitation and delay, and his persistent urging, caused them to be observed, and before they had retired for the night, a lawless crowd gathered about the house. It was an immense company, youth and aged men alike inflamed by the vilest passions. The strangers had been making inquiry in regard to the character of the city, and Lot had warned them not to venture out of his door that night, when the hooting and jeers of the mob were heard, demanding that the men be brought out to them.

“The strangers whom Lot had endeavored to protect, now promised to protect him, and to save also all the members of his family who would flee with him from the wicked city.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 158–159. Lot’s life was saved because of his hospitality to two complete strangers. He risked his life for complete strangers. He could

have left them in the street, thinking of his own safety when they initially declined. Had he not such a spirit of hospitality, he would have perished with Sodom.

In both these cases, the travelers would have survived without the help of Abraham and Lot. They were heavenly beings, and Abraham communicated with One, being the Son of God. Just to think of this is an awesome thought. Who is God? The Omnipotent One—the Creator of the Universe. He is one who has been in existence from everlasting to everlasting. And He stooped to visit Abraham on this one planet in rebellion. He took such care for the individual needs of Abraham. Both Abraham and Lot were tremendously blessed when they showed kindness and hospitality to some apparently weary travelers who intended to pass on by.

Why did the “travelers” seem to want to pass by? They were testing the sincerity of Abraham and Lot. Testing their hospitality and kindness. Many people live only for themselves and have little to share with others, let alone complete strangers.

“The privilege granted Abraham and Lot is not denied to us. By showing hospitality to God’s children we, too, may receive His angels into our dwellings. Even in our day, angels in human form enter the homes of men and are entertained by

them. And Christians who live in the light of God's countenance are always accompanied by unseen angels, and these holy beings leave behind them a blessing in our homes." *-Conflict and Courage*, p. 50

## WALKING ON WATER

Then there was the time when the lives of the disciples were in danger and Jesus walked on the water.

"And He saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night He cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. But when they saw Him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw Him, and were troubled. And immediately He talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." Mark 6:48-50

"At the moment when they believe themselves lost, a gleam of light reveals a mysterious figure approaching them upon the water. But they know not that it is Jesus. The One who has come for their help they count as an enemy. Terror overpowers them. The hands that have grasped the oars with muscles like iron let go their hold. The boat rocks at the will of the waves; all eyes are riveted on this vision of a man walking upon the white-capped billows of the foaming sea.

"They think it a phantom that omens their destruction, and they cry out for fear. Jesus advances as if He would pass them; but they recognize Him, and cry out, entreating His help.



Their beloved Master turns, His voice silences their fear, "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid." *-The Desire of Ages*, p. 381

Why would Jesus intend to pass them by? Nothing is written as to why, but they initially thought Him an enemy or a phantom, and terror overpowered them, and they feared their own destruction. There was absolutely no need for them to be so terrified if they were doing the Lord's will. Life will bring dangers, but we need to trust in the Lord. The help came to them in an unexpected manner, but still they should not have

been so fearful. They should have prayed and trusted.

"Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Isaiah 43:1-3

"Jesus read the character of His disciples. He knew how sorely their faith was to be tried. . . .



“Day by day God instructs His children. By the circumstances of the daily life He is preparing them to act their part upon that wider stage to which His providence has appointed them. It is the issue of the daily test that determines their victory or defeat in life's great crisis.

“Those who fail to realize their constant dependence upon God will be overcome by temptation. We may now suppose that our feet stand secure, and that we shall never be moved. We may say with confidence, ‘I know in whom I have believed; nothing can shake my faith in God and

in His word.’ But Satan is planning to take advantage of our hereditary and cultivated traits of character, and to blind our eyes to our own necessities and defects. Only through realizing our own weakness and looking steadfastly unto Jesus can we walk securely.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 381–382

Will the Lord always deliver His children from danger? What did the three Hebrews say to King Nebuchadnezzar when faced with the fiery furnace? “If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery

furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Daniel 3:17–18. The three Hebrews *were* saved from the fiery furnace, but they did not know whether they *would* be. They knew God *could* save them, but they also knew that He may choose not to. Yet their faith did not falter. Many of God's children have perished in an unexpected manner, but they will still be saved. In the Dark Ages, millions of Christians lost their lives, yet they will be saved. Their faith in Jesus did not falter to their dying day.

When you go through trials do not be afraid. Trust the Lord in every circumstance of life, whatever it may be, and whatever trouble and danger you are facing. “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7. As we near the close of time, we are not promised less danger. Remember, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter 5:8. If you are fearful of every little trial today, you will be overwhelmed in the future. Trust today, so you will be faithful when the greater trials come in the future. The Lord is in control.

## EMMAUS

“And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward

“ Abide with us: for it is toward evening,  
and the day is far spent. ”

Luke 24:29

evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.” Luke 24:28–29

The two disciples had walked with a complete stranger to Emmaus and they were blessed. When they reached home, they could have thanked the stranger and walked into their house and had dinner and gone to bed. But no, they urged Him to join them for dinner.

“During the journey the sun had gone down, and before the travelers reached their place of rest, the laborers in the fields had left their work. As the disciples were about to enter their home, the stranger appeared as though He would continue His journey. But the disciples felt drawn to Him. Their souls hungered to hear more from Him. ‘Abide with us,’ they said. He did not seem to accept the invitation, but they pressed it upon Him, urging, ‘It is toward evening, and the day is far spent.’ Christ yielded to this entreaty and ‘went in to tarry with them.’

“Had the disciples failed to press their invitation, they would not have known that their traveling companion was the risen Lord. *Christ never forces His company upon anyone.* He interests Himself in those who need Him. Gladly will He enter the humblest home, and cheer the lowliest heart. But if men are too indifferent to think of the heavenly Guest, or ask Him to abide with them, He

passes on. Thus many meet with great loss. They do not know Christ any more than did the disciples as He walked with them by the way.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 800 (emphasis mine)

*Keep your eyes open. You do not want to have the angels pass you by. Read carefully the following statements:*

“The Lord would have our perceptions keen to understand that these mighty ones who visit our world have borne an active part in all the work which we have called our own. These heavenly beings are ministering angels, and they frequently disguise themselves in the form of human beings. As strangers they converse with those who are engaged in the work of God. In lonely places they have been the companions of the traveler in peril. In tempest-tossed ships angels in human form have spoken words of encouragement to allay fear and inspire hope in the hour of danger, and the passengers have thought that it was one of their number to whom they had never before spoken.” –*The Upward Look*, p. 84

“As you open your door to Christ's needy and suffering ones, you are welcoming unseen angels. You invite the companionship of heavenly beings. They bring a sacred atmosphere of joy and peace. They come with praises upon their lips, and an answering strain is heard in heaven. Every deed of

mercy makes music there.” –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 276

“These words have lost none of their force through the lapse of time. Our heavenly Father still continues to place in the pathway of His children opportunities that are blessings in disguise; and those who improve these opportunities find great joy. ‘If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.’ Isaiah 58:10, 11” –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 132

“Celestial beings have taken an active part in the affairs of men. They have appeared clothed in garments that shone as the lightning; they have come as men in the garb of wayfarers. Angels have appeared in human form to men of God. They have rested, as if weary, under the oaks at noon. They have accepted the hospitalities of human homes. They have acted as guides to benighted travelers. They have, with their own hands, kindled the fires at the altar. They have opened prison doors and set free the servants of the Lord. Clothed with the panoply of heaven, they came to roll away the stone from the Saviour's tomb.

“In the form of men, angels are often in the assemblies of the righteous; and they visit the assemblies of the wicked, as they went to Sodom, to make a record of their deeds, to determine whether they have passed the boundary of God’s forbearance. The Lord delights in mercy; and for the sake of a few who really serve Him, He restrains calamities and prolongs the tranquillity of multitudes. Little do sinners against God realize that they are indebted for their own lives to the faithful few whom they delight to ridicule and oppress.

“Though the rulers of this world know it not, yet often in their councils angels have been spokesmen. Human eyes have looked upon them; human ears have listened to their appeals; human lips have opposed their suggestions and ridiculed their counsels; human hands have met them with insult and abuse. In the council hall and the court of justice these heavenly messengers have shown an intimate acquaintance with human history; they have proved themselves better able to plead the cause of the oppressed than were their ablest and most eloquent defenders. They have defeated purposes and arrested evils that would have greatly retarded the work

of God and would have caused great suffering to His people. In the hour of peril and distress ‘the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.’ Psalm 34:7.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 631–632

*Are there times when Jesus would pass you by? Will you not notice when He is walking past? Another question to ask is, Will you pass Him by?*

We may not be required to invite someone to our homes, but when you are out doing errands, and shopping, are you aware of others around you? Do you ever notice if there is someone in need? Or someone may just need a smile. We read earlier that “Christ never forces His company on anyone.” He will not force His company on you if you are too busy.

Where is Jesus today? Is He too busy to notice you? He has billions of prayers to answer at all times on this earth. There is a vast universe beyond that needs care. Does He take notice of you? Will He be interested in visiting your home? Whether we realize it or not, Christ is Omnipresent. There are angels everywhere, both good and evil, both fighting for your soul. Who will win? The decision is yours.

“Angels are belting the world, refusing Satan his claims to supremacy, made because of the vast multitude of his adherents. We hear not the voices, we see not with the natural sight the work of these angels, but their hands are linked about the world, and with sleepless vigilance they are keeping the armies of Satan at bay till the sealing of God’s people shall be accomplished.” –*Maranatha*, p. 266

Do not let Jesus pass you by. He is very willing and interested in spending time with you. And He has sent a host of heavenly angels to protect you and keep you safe.

*Let me at Thy throne of mercy,  
Find a sweet relief;*

*Kneeling there in deep contrition,  
Help my unbelief.*

*Trusting only in Thy merit,  
Would I seek Thy face;*

*Heal my wounded, broken spirit,  
Save me by Thy grace.*

*“Thou the spring of all my comfort,  
More than life to me;*

*Whom have I on earth beside Thee,  
Whom in heaven but Thee.”*

*“Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry.  
While on others Thou art calling,  
Do not pass me by.”*

Amen.

*“ Saviour, Saviour, hear my humble cry.  
While on others Thou art calling,  
Do not pass me by. ”*



# Do you want to Reach *Your Goals?*

By *Stephanie Damaris & Sarmientos Lopez (Italy)*

*Adapted from "L'osservatore del sabato, Vol. 39, No. 3"*

**O**ur motivation to reach our goals and fulfill our dreams is not, first of all, believing in ourselves, but rather believing in the promises of GOD. When you believe in GOD, you discover what your origin is, what your value is, that your life has a purpose, and thus you are happy. Helen S. Rice wrote a very impressive text: "Life without purpose is barren; and you cannot have a harvest unless a seed is planted; and you cannot have any achievement without a goal; and games cannot be won unless they are played; and prayers cannot be answered unless they are offered."

Dear brother and dear sister, we certainly may have the desire to reach certain goals, but there is another step we must take first. Why? Because if you want to obtain something in life, you must first yearn for it and then take the first step. Even if there is a

sea in front of you, you must trust in GOD. Sometimes GOD opens the sea, other times He teaches us to walk through it: but it is precisely for this reason that we must pray for guidance.

The Bible tells of a man, from whom we learn that there is neither age nor difficulty that can prevent us from reaching our goals when we trust in GOD. When you believe in GOD, you find the purpose of your life. When you know what your purpose in life is, you will have the right decision, your desires will be right. You will make correct decisions because in Christ you will find the meaning of life and discover which are the greatest dreams to follow.

The man mentioned was 85 years old, when he achieved the goals of his life. Joshua 14:8-10 wrote this about Caleb: "Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of

the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God. And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old."

Caleb had a dream. He wanted to conquer the land of Hebron,

The Bible tells us that Caleb had remained faithful to the Lord.

Dear brother and sister, when we follow the principles of God and follow Him faithfully, there is no land that cannot be conquered, no dream that cannot be realized, because faith in GOD helps you to achieve the greatest successes and realize the greatest goals; there is nothing impossible. Faith brings great benefits into our lives. GOD heard Caleb's declaration of faith; faith must be declared before fighting the battle. Caleb had already won because he had declared his trust in GOD. Therefore, remember that faith

Secondly, we learn that strength and ability do not depend on our capabilities, but on our faith in GOD. Faith is trust that what we see afar off is a reality and is well present in our life. We must trust in GOD and depend on GOD.

The greatest mountain we must conquer is self. Since Christ the Lamb who was slain; and lives again a triumphant conqueror is our Saviour, we must have faith in, and through, Him. Then we can, like Caleb, conquer the giant of self, and with faith and trust enter the promised heavenly Canaan. The request then that we should make to Jesus today is

“ Now therefore give me this mountain,  
whereof the Lord spake in that day.  
if so be the Lord will be with me,  
then I shall be able to drive them out. ”

Joshua 14:12

the portion of the Promised Land where the greatest giants lived. Caleb said: "Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day. . . . if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out." Joshua 14:12

But Caleb did not want the land of Hebron for free: he wanted to win and fight because he had the same strength and the same vigor, but above all, he had the same faith, he had the same trust in GOD as he did 40 years earlier. Where did Caleb's strength of spirit come from?

makes the promises real.

From Caleb we can learn interesting things, because neither age nor any other circumstance can prevent us from the greatest achievements of life. First of all, Caleb turned to Joshua with a specific request. He did not go saying: "Give me just anything." Therefore, when you go to GOD, ask and present your requests to GOD by clearly specifying what you desire. And GOD will hear your prayer and will know when to give you what you ask.

"Lord give me salvation, Lord give me faith." And if you have other desires, put them in the hands of the Lord and never doubt what GOD can do for you."

What are the greatest dreams you have in life? Put them in the hands of the Lord and learn to trust in His promises as a concrete reality in your life, because there is nothing impossible for the one who trusts in GOD.

Amen.



# The Week of [Re]Creation

*By Makoto Matsumoto (AB)*

**G**od created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. We know this as “the week of creation.” But did you know that God also works through seven divine steps in His work of re-creation—the redemption and salvation of our lives? Even more amazing is that this week of re-creation perfectly corresponds to the sanctuary, the sacred map of our salvation. Come and discover how God’s plan of redemption is beautifully revealed through the pattern of the sanctuary and the week of creation.

## Day 1

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon

the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. . . .” Genesis 1:1–5

God created the light on the first day. In the Bible, the light represents the truth and the gospel (Psalm 43:4; 119:105; 2 Corinthians 4:4–6). What is the gospel? The gospel is expressed clearly in the first thing we meet in the tabernacle—the altar of the burnt offerings. To this altar, sinners were to bring their sacrifice, a little lamb, which is a symbol of Jesus. They put their hands on the lamb and confessed their sins. In this way, their sins were “transferred” to the sacrifice, and they had to kill the animal in their stead (Leviticus 4:27–

29). This service shows us the light and the gospel—Jesus died for us and in our stead as the lamb of God (John 1:29). And from this point, our Christian journey of the week of re-creation begins.

“ . . . And the evening and the morning were the first day.”  
Genesis 1:5

## Day 2

When we discover the truth, our hearts are filled with a desire to follow Jesus, and dedicate our lives to Him. God calls us to make a public declaration of this decision. It is called “baptism.” And it was represented as the laver in the tabernacle. The laver was filled with water, and priests were required to wash their hands and feet before entering the sanctuary, symbolizing the impor-

# “And God saw every thing that He had

tance of baptism at the beginning of our Christian life (Exodus 30:18–21).

Baptism is not merely an immersion of our bodies into the water. Through baptism, we show our decision to separate from our life of sin in the past and to be born again in the new life (Acts 22:16). God has shown this lesson by separating the water into two bodies on the second day of creation.

“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. . . .” Genesis 1:6–8

Being born into a Christian family, I used to wonder why baptism is so important. It was difficult for me to understand what difference baptism would make, when I was already a Christian and when I already loved God. The wedding is the example I use often to answer to those who have the same question. The couple love each other, both before and after the wedding. The wedding does not make any difference to the depth of their love. However, the wedding is important as it is the vow we make publicly in front of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, angels and all those

who witness the wedding. Baptism is the same. We love Jesus before and after baptism. The act of baptism itself does not have any power and does not make any difference to our spirituality. However, through baptism, we make a vow in front of the three persons of the Godhead, angels, all those beings in the other worlds, and to our witnesses, that we love Jesus and that we belong to Him.

“And the evening and the morning were the second day.” Genesis 1:8

## Day 3

“And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.” Genesis 1:9–12

On the third day, God created the land and food. The food represents the word of God, in other words, the Bible

(Matthew 4:4; Psalm 119:103; Jeremiah 15:16; 1 Peter 2:2). As we start our Christian life, after knowing the gospel and committing ourselves to God, we live a life of walking every day with God. How does this life look like? It means that whatever we do, we do it according to His will. Then, how do we know His will? By communicating with Him. Communication is made of two components—listening and talking. We listen to God by reading His word, the Bible; and we talk to God through prayer. However, we need one more component added to these first two. Since we are such lowly beings who cannot understand His words, and who do not know how to pray, we need the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10–14; Romans 8:26). These three elements are represented in the sanctuary as the table of shewbread (the Bible), the alter of incense (the prayer), and the candlestick (the Holy Spirit).

“And the evening and the morning were the third day.” Genesis 1:13

## Day 4

However, technically, the Holy Spirit is represented by the olive oil that was used to light up the lamps on the candlestick (Exodus 27:20–21; Matthew 25:1–4). Therefore, the candlestick represents not only the

*And made, and, behold, it was very good.”*

Holy Spirit, but the instrument that God has chosen to reflect the light by having the Holy Spirit dwelling in them.

Then, who are these instruments?

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.” Genesis 1:14–18

The first half and the second half of creation correspond to each other. God created different spaces from Day 1 to 3, and created dwellers or instruments of the space from Day 4 to 6. Sun, moon, and stars (Day 4) were created as the instrument of the light (Day 1). Birds and fishes (Day 5) were created as the dwellers of the sea and the sky (Day 2). And land animals and humans (Day 6) were created as the dwellers of the land (Day 3).

Now, this firmament of the heaven shows us the instruments to shine the light to the

world. Firstly, sun, moon, and stars represent family. Joseph once had a dream of the sun, the moon, and 11 stars bowing to him. Jacob’s explanation shows that it each represents his father, his mother, and his brothers (Genesis 38:9–10). Indeed, the family is the instrument of the light. God has planned family to be the channel of light to the world and to society. This is possible only when the family invites the Holy Spirit to be among them and to guide them.

The sun, moon, and stars also represent the church (Revelation 12:1). God has set the church as the instrument of the light. Only when the members are united with repentance and prayer, as in the time of the early rain, can we receive the Holy Spirit and shine the light to the world.

Our re-creation is not just about the salvation of our own souls. It includes the privilege and mission to join His missionary work. If the light we receive does not reflect from us and lead others to Jesus, we have never truly received the light in the first place. “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father

which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:14–16

“And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.” Genesis 1:19

## Day 5

“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.” Genesis 1:20–22

Indeed, the missionary spirit should be part of us. On the fifth day, God created fishes that represents the souls we should reach. We are called to be fishers of men (Matthew 4:19).

Birds are animals that head toward the sky, just as the incense. The altar of incense represents prayer (Psalm 141:2). Now, what does prayer have to do with the missionary spirit?

“Our prayers are not to be a selfish asking, merely for our own benefit. We are to ask that we may give. The principle of Christ’s life must be the princi-

ple of our lives. 'For their sakes,' He said, speaking of His disciples, 'I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified.' John 17:19. The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners. We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us." —*Prayer*, p. 307

Often, we pray only for our needs and wants. However, if we are truly participating in His re-creation, the same spirit of Jesus who prayed for others should be ours too.

"And the evening and the morning were the fifth day." Genesis 1:23

## Day 6

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creep-

ing thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so." Genesis 1:24–30

God created man as the perfect prince of this earth, according to His image, and as the one who has dominion over other creatures. We are called to restore His image, to reach the perfect standard. "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Colossians 3:10

Many Christians believe it is impossible to reach a perfect character on this earth. However, Jesus' command to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect is not only a command but also a promise (Matthew 5:48).

We are not able to reach this standard by our own efforts or merits. We need the power of creation, which is also the power of re-creation. The same power that created Adam in

His perfect image is able to do the same to our souls. And thus, when His image is restored and when we are made able to keep His commandments through faith in His power, we will fulfill the promise of the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy, which contain the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 10:4–5; Revelation 14:12).

"And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." Genesis 1:31

## Day 7

The creation is finished. We are restored in His image. Then, what will happen next?

God is not happy with just restoring the kingdom of grace in our hearts. After His image is restored in us, God wants to be physically with us. He wants to bring us to the kingdom of glory. Yes, He is coming again to take us to heaven.

This truth is represented as Shekinah in the Sanctuary. Shekinah, which is His glory, means "dwelling" and "resting." As His glory rested upon the sanctuary, He dwelt among the Israelites. "And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." Exodus 25:8; 40:34–35

When that day comes, we will see God face to face. We will

dwell with Him, not only spiritually, but physically. Then there will be the rest for us and for the world. There will be no more sorrow, no more death, no more tears. After God completes the new creation in us, He will rest with us. After God creates the new heaven and the new earth, the world will finally be at rest.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His

work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3

## Conclusion

There are many “gods” in this world. There have been countless idols. Some believe in a god of science, a god of ideology, a god of philosophy, a god of money. . . . There is also a god of Buddhism, a god of Islam, many human gods in different cults. . . .

Among all these, which God do we believe in? How do we identify the one and only true God? Our God is the God with the power of creation. We believe in God who created the heaven and the earth. And that is why

we keep the Sabbath, because it is the memorial of His work and power of creation.

If so, why should we not believe in His power of re-creation? If He could create the world and us once already, why would He not be able to create His image in us again? He is able to create in us again. He is able to restore His image in us again. He is able to lead us to perfection. Only those who believe in the capability of His power in this work are the true Sabbath keepers who participate in the work of the three angels.

It is my wish and prayer that we all may be created again.

Amen.

Day	Creation	Sanctuary	[Re]Creation
1	Light	The Alter of Burnt Offering	The Truth & The Gospel
2	Division of water / Firmament	The Laver	Baptism
3	The Land & The Plants	The Table of Shewbread	The Bible
4	Sun, Moon & Stars	The Candlesticks	The Holy Spirit / Family, The Church
5	Birds & Fish	The Alter of Incense	Prayer / Missionary
6	Animals & Man	The Ark of The Covenant	Perfection
7	The Sabbath	Shekinah	Glorification / Rest



# A Good Steward is A Good Samaritan

By Everado Sandoya (Dominica)

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” 1 Corinthians 4:1–2

Many times we have heard that we should be Good Samaritans; we have also heard the teachings of Jesus about it, but what does it mean to be a Good Samaritan?

We can read an interesting answer in *The Desire of Ages*.

“In the story of the good Samaritan, Christ illustrates the nature of true religion. He shows that it consists not in systems, creeds, or rites, but in the performance of loving deeds, in bringing the greatest good to others, in genuine goodness. . . .

“The lesson is no less needed in the world today than when it fell from the lips of Jesus. Selfishness and cold formality have well-nigh extinguished the fire of love and dispelled the graces that should make fragrant the character. Many who profess His name have lost sight of the fact that Christians are to represent Christ. Unless there is practical self-sacrifice for the good of others, in the family circle, in the neighborhood, in the church, and wherever we may be, then whatever our profession we are not Christians.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 497, 504

In other words, a good Samaritan is someone who helps those in need. Especially widows, orphans and other poor people

who need medicine, medical care, clothing, shoes, water, food, education, housing, etc. The Good Samaritan helps anyone that is not able to satisfy their basic needs.

It is interesting to note that we cannot be Christians if we are not Good Samaritans.

**1 God has made us stewards to alleviate the wants of our fellows**

“God has made men His stewards, and He is not to be charged with the sufferings, the misery, the nakedness, and the want of humanity. The Lord has made ample provision for all. He has given to thousands of men large supplies with which to alleviate the want of their fellows; but those whom God has

made stewards have not stood the test, for they have failed to relieve the suffering and the needy. When men who have been abundantly blessed of Heaven with large wealth fail to carry out God's design, and do not relieve the poor and the oppressed, the Lord is displeased and will surely visit them. They have no excuse for withholding from their neighbors the help that God has put it into their power to provide; and God is dishonored, His character is misinterpreted by Satan, and He is represented as a stern judge who causes suffering to come upon the creatures He has made. This misrepresentation of God's character is made to appear as truth, and thus through the temptation of the enemy men's hearts are hardened against God. Satan charges upon God the very evil he himself has caused men to commit by withholding their means from the suffering. He attributes to God his own characteristics." *—The Review and Herald, June 26, 1894*

**2 If all people in the entire world were good stewards of God, there would be no suffering in destitution**

"If men would do their duty as faithful stewards of their Lord's goods, there would be no cry for bread, none suffering in destitution, none naked and in want. It is the unfaithfulness of men that brings about the state of suffering in which humanity is plunged. If those whom God has made stewards would but appropriate their Lord's goods to the object for which He gave to them, this state of suffering would not exist. The Lord tests

men by giving them an abundance of good things, just as He tested the rich man of the parable. If we prove ourselves unfaithful in the righteous mammon, who shall entrust to us the true riches? It will be those who have stood the test on the earth, who have been found faithful, who have obeyed the words of the Lord in being merciful, in using their means for the advancement of His kingdom, that will hear from the lips of the Master, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'" *—Ibid.*

**3 Those who are indifferent to the wants of the needy will be counted unfaithful stewards by GOD**

"God weighs actions, and everyone who has been unfaithful in his stewardship, who has failed to remedy evils which were in his power to remedy, will be of no esteem in the courts of heaven. Those who are indifferent to the wants of the needy will be counted unfaithful stewards, and will be registered as enemies of God and man. Those who misappropriate the means that God has entrusted to them to help the very ones who need their help, prove that they have no connection with Christ, because they fail to manifest the tenderness of Christ toward those who are less fortunate than themselves." *—The Review and Herald, December 10, 1895*

**4 Every church member is a steward of the grace of GOD**

"But God does not want His people to hang their weight upon the ministers. As a stew-

ard of the grace of God, every church member should feel an individual responsibility to have life and root in himself. All who are ordained unto the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. He who loves God supremely and his neighbor as himself cannot rest content with doing nothing." *—Welfare Ministry, p. 111*

**5 The churches should not neglect their stewardship**

"The churches that have the poor among them should not neglect their stewardship and throw the burden of the poor and sick upon the sanitarium. All the members of the several churches are responsible before God for their afflicted ones. They should bear their own burdens. If they have sick persons among them, whom they wish to be benefited by treatment, they should, if able, send them to the sanitarium. In doing this they will not only be patronizing the institution which God has established but will be helping those who need help, caring for the poor as God requires us to do." *—Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 551*

**6 A person that spends his money for selfish pleasure is an unfaithful steward**

"While God in His providence has laden the earth with His bounties and filled its storehouses with the comforts of life, want and misery are on every hand. A liberal Providence has placed in the hands of His human agents an abundance to supply the necessities of all, but

# “Well done, thou good

the stewards of God are unfaithful. In the professed Christian world there is enough expended in extravagant display to supply the wants of all the hungry and to clothe the naked. Many who have taken upon themselves the name of Christ are spending His money for selfish pleasure, for the gratification of appetite, for strong drink and rich dainties, for extravagant houses and furniture and dress, while to suffering human beings they give scarcely a look of pity or a word of sympathy.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 274

**7 When we withhold goods to help those in need we are selfishly withholding Christ's goods**

“The poor, the homeless, and the widows are among us. I heard a wealthy farmer describe the situation of a poor widow among them. He lamented her straitened circumstances, and then said: ‘I don’t know how she is going to get along this cold winter. She has close times now.’ Such have forgotten the Pattern, and by their acts say: ‘Nay, Lord, we cannot drink of the cup of self-denial, humiliation, and sacrifice which You drank of, nor be baptized with the suffering which You were baptized with.

We cannot live to do others good. It is our business to take care of ourselves.’

“Who should know how the widow should get along unless it be those who have well-filled granaries? The means for her to get along are at hand. And dare those whom God has made His stewards, to whom He has entrusted means, withhold from the needy disciples of Christ? If so, they withhold from Jesus. Do you expect the Lord to rain down grain from heaven to supply the needy? Has He not rather placed it in your hands, to help and bless them through you? Has He not made you His instrument in this good work to prove you and to give you the privilege of laying up a treasure in heaven?” —*Welfare Ministry*, p. 215–216

**8 Childless couples whom God has made stewards of means should help the orphans**

“If those who have no children, and whom God has made stewards of means, would expand their hearts to care for children who need love, care, and affection, and assistance with this world’s goods, they would be far happier than they are today. . . .

“All who profess to have a Father in heaven, who they hope will care for them, and finally

take them to the home He has prepared for them, ought to feel a solemn obligation resting upon them to be friends to the friendless and fathers to the orphans, to aid the widows and be of some practical use in this world by benefiting humanity. Many have not viewed these things in a right light. If they live merely for themselves, they will have no greater strength than this calls for.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 328–329

**9 Stewards of the Lord's goods should not spend on luxuries when there are so many people in need**

“What if they should see inscribed upon their expensive decorations in their homes, the pictures, and furniture, ‘Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house’! In the dining room, where the table is laden with abundant food, the finger of God has traced, ‘Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?’

“Let all, old and young, consider that it is not a light matter to be the Lord’s steward and to be charged in the books of heaven with using in a selfish manner. The needy, the oppressed, are left in want, while the Lord’s money is selfishly squandered in extravagance

# and faithful servant ”

and luxury. O that all will remember that God is no respecter of persons! It is a great thing to be a steward, faithful and true, before a just impartial God, who will not excuse in any of His stewards any unfairness or any robbery toward Him.” – *Ibid.*, p. 270

## 10 Christian stewards are to act as God’s treasurers to use which He has given us to His service

“The poor are God’s heritage. Christ has given His life for them. He calls upon those whom He has appointed to act as His stewards, to give liberally of the means entrusted to them to relieve the poor and to support His work in the earth. The Lord is rich in resources. He has appointed men to act as His treasurers in this world. That which He has given them they are to use in His service.” – *Ibid.*, p. 272

## 11 A thank offering for the poor

“In every church there should be established a treasury for the poor. Then let each member present a thank offering to God once a week or once a month, as is most convenient. This offering will express our gratitude for the gifts of health, of food, and of comfortable clothing. And according as God has blessed

us with these comforts will we lay by for the poor, the suffering, and the distressed. I would call the attention of our brethren specially to this point. Remember the poor. Forego some of your luxuries, yea, even comforts, and help those who can obtain only the most meager food and clothing. In doing for them you are doing for Jesus in the person of His saints. He identifies Himself with suffering humanity. Do not wait until your imaginary wants are all satisfied. Do not trust to your feelings and give when you feel like it and withhold when you do not feel like it. Give regularly, either ten, twenty, or fifty cents a week, as you would like to see upon the heavenly record in the day of God.” – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 150

## 12 The reason for barrenness

“None of our churches need be barren and unfruitful. But some of our brethren and sisters are in danger of starving to death spiritually even when they are constantly hearing the truth presented by our ministers, for they neglect to impart that which they receive. *God requires every one of His stewards to use the talent entrusted to him. He bestows rich gifts upon us in order that we may bestow them freely*

*upon others.* He keeps the heart flooded with the light of His presence, in order that we may reveal Christ to our fellow men. How can those who fold their hands in ease, content to do nothing, expect God to continue to supply their necessities? The members of all our churches should labor as those who must give an account.” – *The Review and Herald*, November 11, 1902

## Conclusion

The Good Samaritan was a good steward of God's goods because He knew how to work to earn a significant amount of money, He knew how to manage money and knew how to use his money and resources to save the life of his neighbor and help restore him even though the thieves almost killed that poor Jew. It should be noted that the Jews hated the Samaritans, but the Good Samaritan taught us to love our enemies. Let us do the work of the Good Samaritan and do works of love and mercy even to our enemies, so that we may be children of our Heavenly Father.

Let us always remember that a Good Steward is a Good Samaritan

May our Good God of Love help us to fulfill the mission He has entrusted to us. Amen.

# HEALTHY RECIPE

By Franziska S. Pedersen (ON)





# Walnut Tofu Balls

## Ingredients:

- 1 Cup raw walnuts, chopped
- 3 Cups whole wheat bread crumbs
- 1 medium onion, chopped fine
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 Tbsp. soy flour
- 1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning or dry parsley
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. red paprika, mild
- 1 tsp. Himalayan salt
- ½ tsp. curry powder
- 2 Cups mashed, soft organic tofu

## Instructions:

In a large bowl, **combine** breadcrumbs, walnuts, seasonings and soy flour. **Stir** in tofu until everything is moist. **Adjust** seasonings to taste. **Roll** into balls about the size of walnuts. (If the mixture is a little too dry to hold the balls together, add a small amount of water)

**Bake** uncovered, on a parchment paper-covered cookie sheet at 350 degrees Fahrenheit (175 degrees Celsius) for about 30 minutes total. **Turn** the nut balls over, every few minutes. **Enjoy!** Makes about 35 balls.

## Nutritional Facts:

**Tofu** is high in protein and contains most of the essential amino acids our body needs. It also has a high variety of minerals and vitamins.

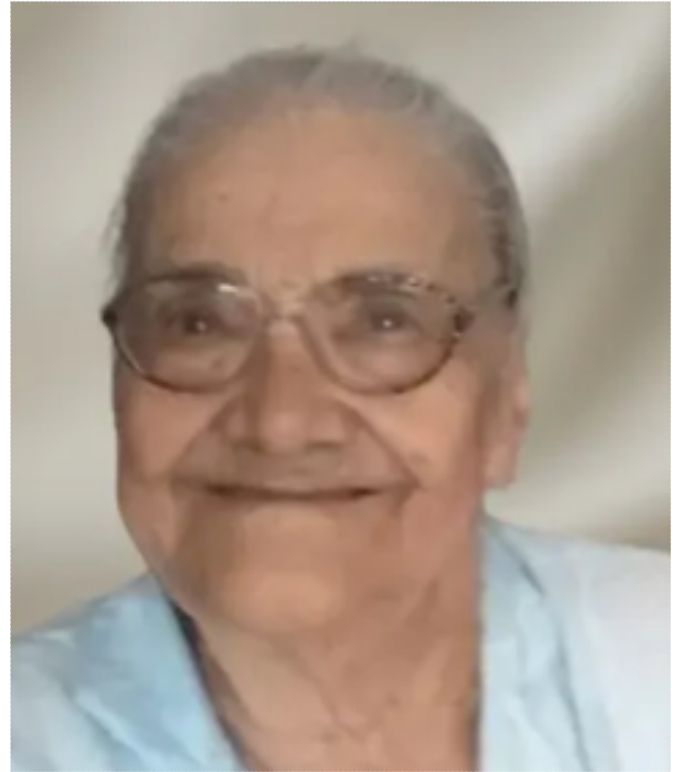
**Walnuts** are an excellent source of several vitamins and minerals, including copper, which promotes heart health, and also helps to boost bone growth, support nerves and immune function.

## Asleep in Jesus

With great sadness, we share the passing of our beloved Sister Maria Petrona Polanco De Garcia. Our hearts are with the family during this difficult time.

Maria Petrona Polanco De Garcia, born in El Salvador on April 29, 1925, peacefully passed away in Scarborough on January 21, 2026, at approximately 4:35 p.m. Maria was a devoted wife to Jose Maria Garcia Avalos Elizondo and a loving mother to Jose Ricardo Garcia, Daniel Antonio Garcia, Ana Alicia Garcia, Rutilio Manuel Garcia (deceased July 2024), and Nery Eduardo Garcia. She was a dedicated housekeeper by occupation and, above all, a faithful servant of God. Maria deeply cherished her large family and treasured ev-

ery moment spent with her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and the rest of her family. She was blessed to witness and nurture four generations, a remarkable milestone that fills the Garcia family with pride and gratitude. Her faith was central to her life. She found joy in reading the Bible, praying, and singing, and her devotion to God was evident to all who knew her. Maria also loved food, being outdoors, and admiring God's creation—especially beautiful flow-



ers and trees. Maria leaves behind a lasting impact on everyone whose life she touched. She will be deeply missed, yet we find comfort in knowing that her legacy lives on through the lessons she taught, the love she shared, and the countless memories we will cherish. Amen.



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## Retirement Home Visit in Calgary

The Calgary church youth have continued regularly visiting two retirement homes—one downtown with a monthly Sabbath program and another in Chestermere with biweekly Sunday visits. Through singing and instrumental music, they bring

comfort, encouragement, and companionship to the residents. May these songs uplift hearts, open a path for the present truth, and may God bless our young people for shining Christ's love through their ministry. Amen.

# Canadian Field Family Department Special Online Seminar



IMS Canada  
Family Department

Special Live Seminar

## My Home Circle

*a Symbol of Heaven*

The Canadian Field Family Department held an online family meeting on Sunday, December 28 at 11:00 AM EST. Br. Finagnon Bruno Allamon presented the topic “My Home Circle, a Symbol of Heaven,” reflecting on the sacredness of the family

and sharing encouragement from Acts 16:31 and *The Adventist Home*.

The meeting is now available to watch on the IMS Canada Official YouTube channel, and articles on the seminar’s message will appear

in the next issue of the *The Reformation Messenger*.

May God continue to bless our homes as symbols of heaven.

Amen.

## New Year Greetings by LCO Members

The members of Loud Cry Orchestra (LCO)—the youth orchestra of the IMS Canada Youth Department and Music Department—send their special greetings to everyone through a video. The video is available on the IMS Canada Official Youtube Channel.

LCO is prayerfully planning to perform at the 2026 Canadian Field Conference this coming sum-

mer, as well as to release music videos and share a music album through various music streaming platforms.

May God richly bless the music ministry of these young people, that the message embodied in their music may reach and touch the hearts of listeners through their upcoming projects. Amen.





Switzerland



The Philippines



Chile



Norway



Zambia



USA

**WE BELIEVE:**

The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer.

He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.

The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness.

The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform.

His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.

Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.



**International  
Missionary Society**

Seventh-day Adventist Church  
Reform Movement