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The Reformation *Messenger*

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WE BELIEVE:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The Wonder of It All

By Ellen G. White

“There is a deep earnestness in the invitation, ‘Come; for all things are now ready.’ How could those bidden make excuses of so trivial a character, and risk losing eternal life? And yet in every age of the world men are fulfilling this parable in refusing the invitation to the gospel feast. One urges as an excuse his temporal concerns; his property demands his attention. Another is hindered by the claims of society. But none of these excuses count with God. The refusal decides the eternal destiny of the soul; for the words of Christ are, ‘None of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.’

“Can anyone consider the condescension of God in preparing the gospel feast, and its great cost, and treat the invitation slightly? No man, nor even the highest angel, can estimate the great cost; it is known only to the Father and the Son. The love of God for sinful man is beyond computation. It is the wonder of all heaven, but none can comprehend it. How could their loved Commander in the heavenly courts be permitted to endure such self-denial, such great sacrifice, to bring to man the gospel privileges? And yet with many these privileges are not considered of as much value as the approbation of their neighbours.” —*The Bible Echo*, October 28, 1895

“The work of every mortal is to work on the Lord’s side. Who can measure the worth of the soul? There is no way in which we can estimate the worth of the soul except by the light that shines from Calvary. We there see how Christ valued the human soul. And since He

has given Himself for us, our intellect and all our powers belong to Him.

“What a wonder that Christ died for sinners! Who can understand it? Never can the mystery of Calvary be explained to finite minds. The mind faints as it attempts to grasp it—that God should give His only Son to suffer shame and reproach, to be tracked by spies, to suffer ignominy, and finally to die. And yet, after all this sacrifice, men talk as though they do not need Christ!” —*Manuscript 7*, 1884

“The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that He who could command all the powers of nature, who by a word could summon mighty angels to do His will and execute vengeance upon His enemies,—the beloved of God, the Majesty of Heaven,—submitted to insult, torture, and death, that sinners might be redeemed. That the Maker of all worlds, the Arbiter of all destinies, should lay aside His glory, and humiliate Himself from love to man, will ever excite the wonder and admiration of the universe. As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer, and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song, ‘Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!’” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 468



Aging

Adapted from a sermon by Timo Martin

In this world, everything gets old. For a while, we are young and beautiful, and then we start aging. Our face, skin, and hair starts to show signs of getting old. We lose our memory, strength, and even the desire to live. We then become sick, and then it is all over. We die. This is the way of man. This is the way of the world. Everything is temporary; it exists just for a while and then is gone.

You buy fresh milk from the store, and leave it on the table. Soon it becomes sour and useless, and you throw it out. Fruits are so delicious; soon they start to show signs of decay. Even trees, which last much longer than most other living things, eventually get old and die, and fall to the ground. Everything here is made of the dust of the earth from the soil. Plants, flowers, trees, animals, birds, fish—even people. We are just made of a handful of dust, a few chemicals, and to that state, we will return. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7

When I was a small child, I took clay and formed an image of a person out of the clay. Then I broke it later, and what did I have? Again, I had a handful of clay. This is how man was created, as a handful of dust—soil—soon to return to it.

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 9:5–6. When we die, suddenly our love, hatred, and envy perishes. Moreover, what is left? A handful of dust.

When we think of these things, how pitiful it is that any mortal man or woman starts thinking of himself or herself as important, that he is something great, looking down on others, despising others. Moreover, when these children of dust defy their maker, God, saying, who is God that I should obey Him? What is this old-fashioned

word of God? We modern people are wiser, and know so much better than does God.

For this reason, God has cut our life short. For a while, we are young. For a while, we can be proud. For a while, we can hate. For a while, we can despise others. Then it is over, and God takes this person of clay, and crumbles him into dust again, where he came from.

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.” Ecclesiastes 3:1–8

We have a little time for everything. The murderer has a little time to kill. The thief has a little time to steal. For a while we can hate, envy, hurt, and take advantage of others. Suddenly it will stop. Then there will be no more time!

There is an eternity behind us, and an eternity after our lives end. We have a very small lifespan, where we live, grow old, and then die. Getting old is the way of life, but many people do not like it. People spend billions of dollars in cosmetics, in beauty aids, in surgeries, just to look younger for a little while longer. There are many who think that we are just to live our life, enjoy our time here, and that is the end. How foolish!

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” Psalm 90:12. It is wisdom to understand our time, how to spend our life, and the marvelous opportunities that are given to us. We must use wisdom in counting our days, and deciding on how to spend our short

lifetime. In hate or in love, in peace or in war, in joy or in sorrow. Securing salvation or being lost.

“Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the LORD.” Jeremiah 8:7. Animals are wiser than men. They use their short lifetime better, more usefully than man does.

When something gets old, it normally gets worse, it deteriorates. When something is young, it is beautiful, strong, and good. When something is old, it is decayed, sick, and ready to be thrown away.

Does this also happen in our Christian life? Is a young, newly born Christian spiritual, faithful, full of love, and with a missionary spirit? In addition, is the old Christian stale, lukewarm, complaining, self-righteous, proud of his many years of service? Is the Christian life like this? Does it have to be like this?

When the Prodigal Son returned home, his father was happy and rejoicing, and made a great feast. However, someone was not rejoicing. Who did not care if the younger brother returned or not?

“Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.” Luke 15:25–30

The older son was angry and refused to attend the feast. His father came out to intreat him. The

*“So teach us to number our days,
that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”*

Psalm 90:12

*“Nevertheless
I have somewhat
against thee,
because thou
hast left
thy first love.”*

Revelation 2:4



older brother was jealous of the Prodigal Son who had returned. Why did Jesus use the example of the older brother? Often this is the case. Jesus said, “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.” Matthew 19:30

Jesus spoke another parable: “No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.” Matthew 9:16–17

You cannot add something new to an old garment or bottle. The new teachings of Christ could not be put into the old professors of religious. The Scribes and Pharisees could not accept these new truths.

When two young men, AT Jones, and EJ Waggoner brought their message to the 1888 Conference, the old ministers and leaders opposed them, ridiculed them, and rejected their message. Are

we old like this old garment or the old bottle? Often we have been Christians for many years. Nevertheless, do we have to grow old in our spiritual life? We cannot stop our physical body from aging. However, is it necessary for our spiritual life to age and die?

When our physical body gets older, we will lose our teeth, hair, strength, hearing, eyesight. In our spiritual life, what can we lose? “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” Revelation 2:4. Which love did they lose? They lost their love to God and to their fellow men. In marriage, we often see this. Does it have to happen? Is it necessary?

The first love gives us power and the desire to do all for God and for others. We want to talk to everyone about our wonderful experience. We read our Bible daily, we pray constantly. We would never miss a church meeting. We are willing to help clean the church, go canvassing, sacrifice our money to God’s cause and love everybody.

Then this fervent first love dies, it becomes cold, it becomes critical, condemning of others. We start to neglect Bible study, we start to read worldly books, we neglect prayer, and we rarely have morning and evening worship. Missionary work is neglected; we become so busy with other things. Church meetings are not so important to us anymore. We hardly give more than our tithes to the church. Even our love for our fellow man dies. We lose the idea of man's value, that every person is worth more than the whole world, that each person is someone who has the possibility of salvation. Thus, our first love has died, and we are growing old and feeble spiritually.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Matthew 5:13

Salt can lose its savour. Can it be salted again? No, it is impossible. The only thing left to do is to cast it out. A Christian can lose his savour; this is the same as a young person growing old. The grace that surrounded us has disappeared. Christian beauty is gone. We become formal, mechanical Christians, in name only. Hypocrites—having the appearance of salt, but no taste.

A person can come into our company, and feel no special Christian effect. It is the same as if they had met an unbeliever. Then we have no value to God or to the church.

What can we lose next in the growing-old process? "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward." Hebrews 10:35. We can lose our confidence, our trust, and our faith in God. A lukewarm careless Christian has no confidence in God. He trusts only in human power. In a time of trial and testing, he fails utterly. He cannot believe that God would take care of him, because he did not obey God faithfully.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Matthew 13:15. They have ears but they do not hear; eyes, but they do not see. Is this not a sign of old age? They have ears and eyes, but they do not function anymore. The signs of the times tell us that the coming of

Christ is very soon. Nevertheless, these people are so involved in worldly pursuits that they do not see or hear anything else. The solemn warnings, and appeals by the Holy Spirit, go to deaf ears and blind eyes.

When our love is completely gone, we begin to have heart troubles, which is a serious spiritual sickness. We have lost the taste, the savour of the salt; our confidence in God is gone, we have weak feet, ready to fall, our hearing and seeing is lost. What comes next?

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Revelation 3:1. You have a name that you are alive, you are a church member, but you are dead. Nature took its toll, and from a long spiritual sickness, a person finally dies. He is now in a lost condition.

Can we stop this aging process? Do we have to grow old spiritually? Paul writes, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: ... But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Ephesians 4: 13, 15. How are we to grow? Into a perfect man—not into a weak, sickly old person.

What is the first thing that we must do in order that we do not grow old, but to have eternal youth spiritually?

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even as Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Corinthians 5:7–8. This little leaven can spoil the happiness and salvation of the whole person, and affect others.

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31. If we wait on the Lord, it is a fountain of youth and strength. How magnificent a sight it is to see an eagle with wings spread out, soaring through the sky, without weariness or fainting.

*“And be not conformed to this world:
but be ye transformed
by the renewing of your mind,
that ye may prove what is that good,
and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

Romans 12:2

Wait upon the Lord. Look to Him for guidance and help, follow Him all the way, and you will not be tired and weary, you will not grow old.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10. The old heart is removed and a heart transplant takes place. The old heart with all its troubles, loveless, cold, hardened like a stone, is removed, and a new heart given us. We will then have the right spirit, fervent, full of zeal.

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:2. The old mind, full of doubting, a confused mind, with poor memory is put away and we will receive a new mind, clear and keen to understand truth. Only God can renew our mind if it has grown old and feeble.

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” 2 Corinthians 4:16. Our body may grow old, but our inward man is renewed daily, made strong, young, with a keen understanding.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus 3:5. When we receive the renewing of the Holy Spirit, we grow younger and stronger. The aging process reverses.

Finally, what happens? “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3. When we are born again, all is new, and the old man is gone. Paul says that we be-

come new creatures. We have a new first love, spirit, mind, zeal, understanding and faith. We are to be born again daily.

Dear readers, we do not need to grow spiritually old. We do not need to lose our first love, nor our savour, taste, or our confidence. We do not need to lose our spiritual hearing and seeing. Our mind does not need to lose memory or strength.

According to the laws of nature in our world, everything grows old, except a faithful child of God. In Him, the aging process is reversed. We have no reason or excuse for spiritual sickness, no excuse for growing old and dying spiritually. We do not need to become an old garment or an old bottle, like the Jews and the Pharisees.

The fountain of youth guarantees us eternal health and strength. What is this fountain of youth? Is it not the living water that Jesus alone can give us? Jesus is the fountain of living water. If we drink of Him, we will never thirst again, and we will never grow old.

Our love will not grow cold. Our missionary spirit will not die. Our prayer life will be strong. Our Bible study will be daily. We hear every word the Lord speaks. We see Him with the eyes of faith, which have not grown dim. We clearly recognize the truth, the church that God leads. As time passes, our first love grows stronger and stronger, until it is stronger than death. We would rather die than sin against God, whom we love. We learn to love all mankind, even the greatest sinner.

May we all remain young in Christ and never grow old.

Amen.

A woman with long hair, wearing a white long-sleeved sweater and a light-colored hat, stands in a field of golden wheat. She is holding a large bundle of harvested wheat stalks high above her head with her right hand. The background shows a vast field of wheat stretching to the horizon under a warm, golden sunset sky. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

Cardinal Concepts in Life

By Daniel Kimeu (Kenya)

1. Value of Life

Life holds immense value both biologically and spiritually. From a scientific perspective, every form of life contributes to the balance of nature. Each species plays a vital role in maintaining ecosystems; biodiversity and environmental stability are key to the survival of all life, including humanity.

From a spiritual standpoint, life is a precious gift from God, entrusted to us with purpose and responsibility. Ellen White emphasizes that we are all created in the image of God, endowed with the power to think, choose, and act. Life has a divine purpose: to reflect God's character, serve others, and prepare for eternity. The value of every soul is immeasurable, seen in the light of Christ's sacrifice. Earthly life is not an end in itself, but a time of preparation for the life to come, an opportunity to cultivate faith, character, and service to God. It must be lived responsibly, with attention to health, moral integrity, and a commitment to doing good. The true object of life is to live for the good of others and the glory of God.

2. Seeking God

Seeking God is the foundation of true meaning in a world often consumed by material possessions and other pursuits. In a time of confusion and loss of connection with the spiritual, turning to the divine can create a balance between one's inner and outer life. This journey is not automatic, but a gradual process of understanding and empathy that deepens our connection both to humanity and the divine will. God longs to be found and does not require us to understand Him fully, but He invites us to seek Him, trust Him, and walk with Him. He desires a close, personal relationship with every person. God is not hiding from humanity; rather, He reaches out to sincere hearts.

Seeking God early and earnestly is important, which symbolizes our priority, dependence, and trust in Him. Beginning each day with prayer, Bible study, and reflection is a conscious act that puts God first in our lives.

True seeking involves the whole heart, not just intellectual curiosity, but spiritual hunger, humility, and openness to being transformed through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Success and change come not from our own strength, but from what God can do through us.

The Scriptures serve as a clear pathway to God, revealing His character, will, and promises. Engaging deeply with the Bible is essential to the pursuit of divine truth.

Those who sincerely seek God experience personal growth, victory over sin, a clearer sense of purpose, and readiness for eternity. The closer one comes to Jesus, the more aware one becomes of personal shortcomings, indicating that the deceptions of the enemy are losing their power.

In a society where human-centered gods such as materialism, fame, and power are often exalted, the true God calls us to sobering reflection, fostering compassion, and transformative growth. To seek God is to turn from hollow pursuits and embrace the divine purpose.

The journey of seeking God is not just a theory but a lived experience, quiet, profound, and sacred. It unifies the soul, reveals eternal truths, and aligns the seeker with God. In a restless world, seeking God remains the most vital, rewarding, and transformative pursuit one can undertake.



3. Health

Health is not merely the absence of disease but the delicate harmony of body, mind, and spirit. In a culture obsessed with productivity and output, health is something that people do not think about until something goes wrong. Yet without it, every step toward freedom, purpose, or joy becomes unstable, vulnerable to collapse under pressure.

When medical treatments cause new problems, and people who excessively worry about their health, get caught in a cycle of unnecessary tests and treatments, it is clear that we need a better, more coordinated approach to health care. Healthcare must consider the whole person, taking into consideration the complexity of the human condition, taking a comprehensive and respectful approach.

True wellness cannot be found through a reliance on medications or by seeking help from short-lived, trendy health solutions. Health is sacred and fundamental, requiring balance, wisdom, and self-care in our daily lives.



The Nine Dimensions of Wellness

To embrace health as a sacred and multi-dimensional part of us, we must consider the Nine Dimensions of Wellness as a holistic framework that views well-being as an interconnected system. Each dimension uniquely contributes to our overall wellbeing:

1. Physical – Maintaining bodily health through exercise, nutrition, sleep, hydration, and preventive care. It honours the body as the vessel for our daily experiences.
2. Emotional – Recognizing, expressing, and managing emotions effectively. This includes building resilience to stress, developing self-compassion, and emotional intelligence.
3. Intellectual – Engaging in mental stimulation through learning, creativity, critical thinking, and open-minded exploration. A vibrant intellect fosters growth and resilience, adaptability to change.
4. Social – Cultivating healthy, supportive relationships and a sense of belonging within families, communities, in the church, and in social circles.
5. Spiritual – Exploring meaning, values, and our connection to God, through religion, nature, a life of purpose, and personal growth.
6. Environmental – Acknowledging how our surroundings, both natural and man-made, impact health. This includes care for our environment, connecting with the outdoors, being in nature, and minimizing exposure to toxins.
7. Financial – Managing our relationship with money through budgeting, debt management, savings, and having the security that comes from financial stability and the responsible use of our money.
8. Occupational – Finding fulfillment and purpose in work, achieving work-life balance, and engaging in meaningful activities aligned with personal values.
9. Cultural – Embracing our heritage while appreciating and respecting diverse worldviews and traditions. Accepting other cultures because we are all one in the eyes of God.

These dimensions are not separate entities but interconnected elements that work together to shape our health, acknowledging that our well-being should be considered holistically. Accepting this comprehensive view of health allows us to go beyond merely treating symptoms to promoting overall wellness.



4. Wealth

Wealth should not only be pursued to gain riches, but it should be used as a way to create a more just and compassionate world. Often wealth is negatively associated with greed or materialism, however true wealth goes beyond material possessions. True wealth includes generosity, wisdom, meaningful relationships, and freedom from financial insecurity.

Unfortunately, society often looks down on those who challenge the traditional definitions of success, those who question the systems that prioritize profit over people. Learning to be proper stewards of our wealth without letting it control us is a crucial skill. Using our wealth ethically is not about accumulating money to be spent unwisely, but about responsibility, the impact we can have in helping others, and honouring God.

Business Integrity

The Bible is a profound lesson book, offering timeless business principles to guide every enter-

prise that seeks to honour God. Its values of diligence, honesty, thrift, temperance, and purity form the foundation of long-lasting success. These principles, especially as seen in the Book of Proverbs, are a treasury of practical wisdom for every professional: the merchant, the artisan, the executive, and the labourer alike.

“Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.” Proverbs 22:29. The Scriptures tell us that in all honest labour there is profit, while idle talk leads to poverty. It warns against sloth, indulgence, and hasty wealth, highlighting that true increase comes from steady, honest efforts.

Many financial failures could be avoided by heeding these divine cautions: “He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent... Wealth gotten in haste shall be diminished; but he that gathereth by labour shall have increase.” Proverbs 28:20; 13:11

The Bible does not view wealth negatively, but it condemns wealth gained through deception or by taking advantage of others: “The getting of trea-

ures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death." Proverbs 21:6

It also underscores the dangers of debt and irresponsible financial obligations: "The borrower is servant to the lender... He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it." Proverbs 22:7; 11:15

Most importantly, the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," is not limited only to outright theft. It demands integrity in every financial transaction, condemns overreaching in trade, and insists on the fair payment of wages and debts. (This section paraphrased from *The Adventist Home*, p. 391–392).

In a world that celebrates shortcuts to wealth, and ignores moral compromises, the Bible calls for ethical stewardship and justice in commerce. Wealth, when aligned with these principles, becomes not only a resource, but it reveals one's character, when used as a tool to bless others and honour God.

5. Freedom

Freedom, though widely praised, is frequently misunderstood. It is not the ability to pursue every whim, but true freedom comes from living a life of truth, integrity, and purpose. Amid global upheavals and turmoil, spiritual, political, and ecological freedom has become fiercely debated and often misused. When political leaders take advantage of people's fears, and legal systems are based on prejudice, society's problems are often blamed on individual people's failures. True freedom allows individuals to not be swayed by these current trends, and to remain faithful to principle, grounded in divine truth rather than being influenced by their external environment.

Freedom is not simply doing what we want and pursuing our own desires. It is found in harmony with God's will, where obedience, truth, and love serve as the foundations of both individual freedom the well-being of society as a whole. In a world that often equates freedom with having the choice to do whatever we want, the reality is that true freedom comes from righteousness, having a moral compass, and the willingness to surrender to God's will and trust in His saving power.

As Sister White quoted from the Bible, "The truth shall make you free." John 8:32. She taught that freedom is not achieved by rebelling against the

law, but by embracing divine truth. Sin, in her view, enslaves, clouds one's judgment, destroys relationships, and controls our actions. The gospel, however, breaks those chains, offering freedom from guilt, fear, spiritual ignorance, and destructive habits. "It is not God's purpose to coerce the will. Man was created a free moral agent." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 331

Freedom also rests upon surrendering our will to that of God's will. God never forces the conscience. He invites, calls, and draws but never compels. Love cannot exist without freedom, and freedom cannot exist without the opportunity for moral choice. The ability to choose righteousness, or to reject it, is a choice that we all have, and what we choose determines our final destiny.

Though often seen as restricting our ability to do whatever we want, obedience to God's law is, in fact, the highest form of freedom. It is not a burden, but a safeguard against chaos, slavery to sin, and inner turmoil. The law of God is not a set of arbitrary demands but a reflection of His character, a guideline to growth in grace and true happiness. "The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all created beings depended upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 493

True freedom also means liberation from sin, the deepest form of bondage. Christ's mission was not merely to pardon sin, but to free humanity from its power. In Him, we find deliverance from addictive behaviours, destructive thought patterns, and the weariness that comes from relying on ourselves. Freedom in Christ gives us the strength to live with confidence, grace, and a holy purpose.

Freedom does not give us permission to indulge our desires but rather living a life the glorifies God. True freedom comes with a moral responsibility to serve others, to uphold justice, and to glorify God in all things. It is not avoiding one's duty, but provides us the power to perform it joyfully and faithfully.

To be truly free is to refuse to be bound by the chains of sin. It is to resist the pull of worldly distractions that lead to death, and instead seek eternal life with reverence, humility, and courage.

Amen

1 Once Was Blind

By Jose V. Giner (Italy)

Adapted from "L'osservatore del sabato, Vol. 39, No. 1"

Blindness is something that has always impressed me. When I would see a blind person, I used to think that not being able to see would be the worst thing that could happen to someone. Over the course of my life, I had the opportunity to meet and live with a brother who suffered from this physical disability, and this experience radically changed my point of view. This man cooked, read the Bible (in Braille), and kept his house well organized—everything was in its place, and there was a place for everything. He was a very methodical person and managed to walk along the streets quite easily with the help of his cane. By using his hearing, he could perceive the presence of objects or people; in fact, he sensed much more than I could, and he often amazed me with his keen sense of direction. Sometimes we were in the car together. Since it was in the city where we lived, he knew the streets very well—but I never imagined he could be a navigator in a moving car. "You passed it; the street we're looking for was the previous one," he would tell me. "How is that possible? You can't even see it!" I would reply. And he was right—he was always one step ahead of me. I remember one

day, as we were climbing the stairs to our home, the power went out and I stopped because I couldn't see the steps anymore. He smiled at me as he continued up and said, "You sighted people have many problems." I was deeply moved when he said, "I thank God for giving me spiritual sight, which is much more important in life. I'm simply waiting for the Lord Jesus to return to this earth and give me physical sight as well." At that moment, I realized that spiritual blindness is far more catastrophic than physical blindness.

The Blindness of the Soul's Eyes

The lack of spiritual sight results in the inability to discern the things of God. A person may think they can see, yet still lack spiritual light, just as the physically blind are deprived of sunlight. In the Bible, spiritual blindness is presented very clearly and is often associated with darkness. Darkness can represent death (Job 10:21–22), the difficulties and trials of life (Psalm 23:4), the condition of all those who do not know or accept Christ as their personal Saviour (Matthew 15:14), and finally,



those who know Christ and have accepted Him in their hearts but do not live out their faith.

In this reading, we will focus on the last of these, as it concerns us directly. In the book of Revelation, the Lord rebukes the church of Laodicea. It is a very strong message—a severe rebuke—but it is tied to an invitation to repentance. The problem with Laodicea is that it thinks it has everything and is in need of nothing. But Jesus reveals its true condition: “Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:17. The message to the last church is a striking rebuke and applies to God’s people in our day.

“The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 252. Jesus desires only our good; for this reason, He calls us to repent of our evil deeds, because He loves us (Revelation 3:19). Because of its spiritual lukewarmness, Laodicea risks being spewed out of the Lord’s mouth (Revelation 3:16). Is it possible that each of us suffers from this type of blindness, in a greater or lesser measure? How can we regain

spiritual sight? How can we avoid being spewed out of the Lord’s mouth?

The Cure for Blindness

“I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” Revelation 3:18

The Lord sees the condition of His people and calls them to spiritual revival. He sends warning after warning. His love is long-suffering and He waits for us, but this is misunderstood by the majority, who believe that their sins are not so serious because God’s displeasure is not immediately evident. The Pharisee was convinced that he had God’s favour because of his personal merits: “I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess” Luke 18:11–12. Yet he was blind. The publican, instead, who saw himself as a miserable sinner, found



*I was blind and lost,
but He found me.*

grace in the eyes of God. The eyesalve—God’s grace—was working in his favour, revealing to him the darkest secrets of his heart. He sought God in prayer with a sincere heart, longing for forgiveness and restoration of his soul—and he found it: “This man went down to his house justified” (Luke 18:14), said Jesus. All who will have been washed in the blood of Christ, who have fought a personal battle against sin and overcome, will one day be in the heavenly mansions.

Oh, how we need the eyesalve of God! In Laodicea there was a famous medical school that produced ointments for the eyes. Jesus referenced this fact and applied it to the end-time church. The eyesalve represents the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer who does not realize his dramatic condition. That which should cause a deep sense of alarm is that we ourselves often do not perceive nor understand our degraded state, and we are content just as we are. For this reason, we must go to the word of God and pray, each of us seeking the Lord earnestly, and find Him. We must make this our first duty.

Jesus Knocks at the Door

Despite the harshness of the message to Laodicea, we can see in it a deep desire on God’s part for restoration. It is not the fact that we have sinned that separates us from Him forever, but rather the unwillingness to repent.

Dear friends, let us abandon pride, envy, strife with brethren and sisters, criticism, and feeling superior to others. Outwardly, we may seem good and comply with the external rules of the church, enjoying the favour of others—but if our hearts are not humble, if we tend to think ill of others and discredit them with our negative comments, if we try to tear down rather than build up, if we remain silent in the face of injustice or encourage our brother’s error, if we are indifferent to the needs of the church—then we have a problem with spiritual vision.

The prodigal son realized his terrible condition and decided to return to his father’s house for forgiveness and renewal. David confessed his terrible sins, and the Lord forgave and healed him. Peter

wept bitterly after denying his Master because the balm of the Holy Spirit opened his eyes to the enormity of his guilt and his true condition of unworthiness—but Jesus forgave and healed him. Mary, the great sinner, rejected and shunned by her contemporaries, found forgiveness and restoration in Christ, and for this reason, she broke the alabaster box and anointed the head and feet of the Saviour in gratitude.

Jesus presents Himself as the light of the world (John 9:5). For Christ's light to shine into our lives, we must allow Him to enter our hearts. He stands at the door and knocks—let Him in. Jesus will dine with us and we with Him.

How long has Jesus waited outside the door of our hearts? Have we heard His call?

Let us not despair, despite our condition. Some have fallen into the deep pit of sin, others have drifted away from the church, some still struggle to be free from hidden sins, while others have realized their need for a deeper relationship with God. Whatever the case, the Lord knows. Yet He asks us to open that door—He insists on being our Friend.

Dear reader, open the door to your beloved Jesus. Let Him enter your life and begin to delight in His friendship. He will restore you, heal you, comfort you, and give you hope. He will remain by your side and one day will usher you into His heavenly home.

One day I heard the story of John Newton, the infamous slave trader, born in London on July 24, 1725. He was the son of a merchant ship captain who sailed the Mediterranean. His mother was deeply devout and taught him the Bible from an early age, planting the seed of the gospel in his heart. In 1744, he enlisted in the army and, after a very negative experience, deserted but was captured and severely punished. Demoted to a common sailor, he himself asked to work on a slave

ship. Eventually, he became captain of his own vessel, dedicated to the slave trade.

This man became one of the most terrible and despicable traffickers of African slaves, despised even by his crew for his drunkenness and irreverence. John lived in darkness—he was blind. But his moment of light came when his ship was about to sink in a terrible storm. At that moment, he remembered the God of his mother and cried out:

“Lord, have mercy upon us!”

When the storm passed, John was no longer the same.

From 1755 to 1760, John Newton worked as tide inspector in Liverpool, where he met George Whitefield, evangelist and leader of the Methodist Church in England. He became his follower and a church minister. He also composed hymns, including the famous “Amazing Grace.” Newton also dedicated much time and effort to the abolition of slavery, supporting his friend and evangelist William Wilberforce. With great joy and satisfaction, in 1807 the act abolishing the slave trade was passed by both houses of the British Parliament.

Newton died at the age of 83 as Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth Church. The epitaph in one of his chapels reads:

“John Newton, clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long laboured to destroy.”

The last words of this great man were: “My memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things: That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour.”

The hymn “Amazing Grace” tells the story of Newton’s life, an incredible testimony of his experience with God. He was miserable, lost in complete spiritual blindness, unable to perceive heaven’s light. But Jesus transformed him and made him His instrument of salvation for other souls. For this reason, one verse of the hymn in Spanish says:

“I was blind and lost, but He found me.”

May the Lord bless you.

Amen

MARVELS

in the Celestia

By Emmanuel Salamba (Malawi)

“Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds His chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind.” Psalm 104:1–3

There is a stark contrast between the scientists of old and many of those today. While the former—such as Blaise Pascal, Michael Faraday, and Isaac Newton—were staunch believers in God, the latter are often outspoken opponents of Him and His existence. The early scientists saw science as a tool to draw them closer to biblical truth. But many modern thinkers use science—falsely so called—as a license for skepticism against the Holy writ.

True science, in itself, is not evil. It is, in fact, a blessing. Whoever enters its fields—be it geology, astronomy, biology, physics, or any other—alongside Christ, will only be led to a deeper realization of the greatness of the God of Heaven. And it was for this purpose that this piece of writing was framed.

As we journey deeper into this subject, I urge you to exercise active and deeper imagination. Digest each concept and calculation carefully. Visualize it before moving on to the next.

The wonders of the vast heavenly expanse and its stars

David, the psalmist, reflected deeply on the heavens, and the experience led him to a profound conclusion about man’s place in creation. He said:

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?” Psalm 8:3–4

We do not know exactly what David saw that stirred such awe, but we can take an independent look at the sky. What comes to your mind when you gaze at heaven? Is that great celestial mirror—hanging safely in the sky—a marvel to you also? Consider the stars, some of which are as large as 70 million kilometers in radius. Contrast with the radius of the earth which is just 6371 kilometers. Each star belongs to a cluster—a galaxy—which also contains planets. Every galaxy contains, on average, 100 billion stars. The average distance between two neighboring stars is 47 trillion kilometers. The average diameter of a single galaxy is 946 quadrillion kilometers. Through scientific observation, modeling, and statistical extrapolation, it is estimated that there are about 2 trillion galaxies in the observable universe. The average distance between any two galaxies is over 28 quintillion ($\approx 28,380,000,000,000,000,000$) kilometers. Are you able to visualize what this means? The diameter of the observable universe, where these 2 trillion galaxies reside, is about 93 billion light-years—equal to roughly 880 sextillion kilometers ($\approx 880,000,000,000,000,000,000$ km).

Now, where do you fit into this picture, dear reader? You are on a tiny planet, in a small solar system, around one star (the sun), among 100 billion stars in one galaxy—just

one out of 2 trillion galaxies. Between galaxies there are millions of light-years. When I think about this, my mind is overwhelmed. And yet, the God who brought all this into being did so simply by the word of His mouth. "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven... and it was so... He made the stars also. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day." Genesis 1:14-19

Another startling observation is the one that there are roughly a million times more stars in the observable universe than all the sand grains upon the Earth. What a thought!

Does David's psalm now ring louder in your heart? "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" God is love. And He is great.

The wonders of distance

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" Job 38:31

Have you ever heard of Proxima Centauri, Orion, and the Orion Nebula? Proxima Centauri is the nearest known star to Earth, located 4 light-years away. A light-year is a measure of distance—the length that light travels in a year, moving at a speed of approximately 300,000 kilometers per second. This makes one light-year equal to about 9.46 trillion kilometers. Thus, Proxima Centauri is about 37.84 trillion kilometers from Earth. As of 2025, the fastest spacecraft ever built by humans is the Parker Solar Probe, with a maximum speed of 695,000 kilometers per hour. Even at this hypersonic speed, it would take about 6,588 years to reach Proxima Centauri!

But that is not all.

The Orion constellation and its Nebula are hundreds of times farther away. Orion consists primarily of 81 visible stars, with thousands more—especially in the Orion Nebula, a massive, bright cloud of gas and dust located in Orion's "sword," just below the "belt." The most famous stars in Orion include: Betelgeuse, Rigel, Bellatrix, Saiph, Alnitak, Alnilam, and Mintaka. If you live in the southern hemisphere, you can see some of these stars with the naked eye from November to April. The Orion Nebula is 1,344 light-years away—that is about 12.7 quadrillion kilometers. It would take

the Parker Solar Probe about 2.1 million years to reach that distance.

Suppose Adam, created on the first day of human existence, had boarded the Parker Probe and was miraculously kept alive to this day. In these 6,000 years of earth's existence, he would have traveled only 0.29% of the distance to Orion.

The celestial city beyond

Do you know that something profound is prophesied to happen in the Orion region? "Dark heavy clouds came up and crushed against each other. The atmosphere parted and rolled back; then we could look up through the open space in Orion, whence came the voice of God. The holy city will come through that open space." *—Early Writings, p. 42*

If God's voice and the Holy City are to pass through Orion on their way to Earth, then Heaven—the eternal home—is beyond Orion itself. Now think of the God who deals with such vast distances and incomprehensible measurements. How great is HE?

"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?" Isaiah 66:1

Indeed, our God is Lord alone. He made heaven, the heaven of heavens, and all their host.

The heavens are not just a canvas of stars—they are declarations of divine glory. They declare the power, precision, and loving majesty of our Creator. And yet, amidst all this grandeur, He is mindful of you.

The wonders of speed

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." 2 Corinthians 12:2

"And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal..." Revelation 4:6

"We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass." *—Early Writings, p. 16*

We know and believe that the third heaven wherein lies the City is beyond the starry heaven. It is mind-boggling to imagine the speed required for one to travel to heaven (or nearly heaven) for seven days. Even if the sea of glass was within the starry heaven, let's say at the Orion nebula, calculations show that it would still require us to travel at a superluminal speed of 2.1 billion kilometers per second. Imagine that! According to the laws of known science, this is an impossibility. However, the God we serve will enable us to achieve even greater speeds on our way home.

"Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God." Job 37:14

The sky a lesson book

Apart from appreciating the greatness of the creator God, we can also glean other lessons from it:

Whenever you are encompassed with difficulties, whether being helplessly bound in the snare of sin, or you are facing misfortunes in your temporal life—remember to relentlessly call upon the God you serve. The above thoughts should inspire you with faith, knowing that He who wrote all these wondrous works in the sky cannot fail to set you free. He is exceedingly able to do that. In your sunny days fulfil all the necessary conditions, and in your troublous times the promise will be fulfilled "... call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." Psalm 50:15 (see also verse 14)

On the other hand, sinning willfully and clinging to it should be a fearful thought in all our minds because this is open rebellion against this being who is so omnipotent. "For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act." Isaiah 28:21

At last, let the thought of God's power increase our love to Him, for even though our inferiority and His superiority are as wider apart as the west is from the east, yet we are the objects of His love and solicitude. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God...." 1 John 3:1

"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable." Psalm 145:3.

Amen.

Jesus

The Carpenter

By Makoto Matsumoto (AB)

We often reflect on Jesus' birth, teachings, miracles, and ultimate sacrifice. Yet, have you ever noticed that most of our focus is placed on just the final three and a half years of His life? Jesus lived for approximately 33 and a half years, which means nearly 90% of His earthly life—His first 30 years—is rarely discussed.

In fact, the Bible offers very little detail about those early years. Aside from the accounts surrounding His birth, the only specific event recorded from His youth is when, at twelve years old, He remained behind in the temple during Passover, astonishing the teachers with His understanding. Following that, Scripture simply tells us: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Luke 2:52

Thanks to Mark 6:3, we also know that Jesus was a carpenter: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not His sisters here with us? And they were offended at Him."

However, this is pretty much it! Other than these brief glimpses, the Bible remains silent about His early years.

We can be certain that every moment of Jesus' life held purpose, and there were undoubtedly lessons in those unseen years. Yet God chose not to reveal them. And, actually, this silence holds a profound spiritual lesson for us.

Spoken through Silence

At first glance, Jesus seems to have remained inactive as a missionary—He did not preach, teach, or

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heal as He did later. Why did He wait so long? From a human perspective, it might even seem like He wasted time. If He had started earlier, would He not have blessed even more people?

Yet, during those years, Jesus was not a teacher, a master, or a healer—He was a son. He faithfully fulfilled His role within His family. After Joseph's death, Jesus took on the responsibility of caring for His mother, continuing to work as a carpenter to provide for her. His deep love for Mary is evident even at the cross when He entrusted her to His disciple John: "Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother!" John 19:26–27

For 30 years, Jesus lived a very simple life. He worked full-time to support His family—nothing more, nothing less. Does that sound familiar? It should. That is the reality for most of us. In the church, only a small portion of people serve as full-time ministers or missionaries. The majority of us have jobs and responsibilities outside of church work. Sometimes, we might feel like our lives are too ordinary or repetitive to be meaningful. We may think our life is not as valuable when not leading Bible studies or going on outreach missions. We might feel our lives are "silent" and insignificant.

But, this is precisely how Jesus lived for 30 years. By staying in His small, everyday circle for so long, He shows us that daily life—working, supporting family, and fulfilling responsibilities—is as sacred as public ministry. Preaching and teaching are essential, but so is providing for loved ones.

We go to work to support our families. A paycheck goes toward offerings, bills, groceries, gas, clothing, and necessities as soon as they arrive.

And so, we work—not necessarily because we want to but because we must. Jesus is telling us that this life of providing and caring for the family is a noble and sacred mission.

“In all labour there is profit.” “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” Proverbs 14:23; 1 Timothy 5:8

Sacredness in the Humble Life

“Many are ever restless and disappointed, seeking for some greater work than that which now occupies them. Some mothers long to engage in missionary labor, while they neglect the simplest duties lying directly in their path. The children are neglected, the home is not made cheerful and happy for the family, scolding and complaining are of frequent occurrence, and the young people grow up feeling that home is the most uninviting of all places. . . .

“Jesus made the lowly paths of human life sacred by His example. For thirty years He was an inhabitant of Nazareth. His life was one of diligent industry. He, the Majesty of Heaven, walked the streets, clad in the simple garb of a common laborer. He toiled up and down the mountain steeps, going to and from His humble work. Angels were not sent to bear Him on their pinions up the tiresome ascent, or to lend their strength in performing His lowly task. Yet when He went forth to contribute to the support of the family by His daily toil, He possessed the same power as when He wrought the miracle of feeding the five thousand hungry souls on the shore of Galilee.

“But He did not employ His divine power to lessen His burdens or lighten His toil. He had taken upon Himself the form of humanity with all its attendant ills, and He flinched not from its severest trials. He lived in a peasant's home, He was clothed in coarse garments, He mingled with the lowly, He toiled daily with patient hands. His example shows us that it is man's duty to be in-

dustrious, that labor is honorable.” —*The Health Reformer*, October 1, 1876

Jesus, though the Majesty of Heaven, did not avoid the mundane. He embraced it. His work, though humble, was sacred. Every task He performed, however ordinary, was filled with purpose. Jesus dignified everyday work, showing that providing for the family is as much part of His mission as performing miracles. Jesus worked as an ordinary man, fulfilling His mission in seemingly ordinary ways.

“His life, written upon the pages of history, should encourage the poor and the lowly to perform contentedly the humble duties of their lot. Honorable work has received the sanction of Heaven, and men and women may hold the closest connection with God, yet occupy the humblest position in life. Jesus was as faithfully fulfilling His mission when hiding His divinity with the humble occupation of a carpenter, as when employed in healing the sick, or walking upon the white capped billows to the aid of His terrified disciples. Christ dignified the humble employments of life, by occupying a menial condition, that He might be able to reach the mass of mankind and exalt the race to become fit inmates for the Paradise of God.

“For a long time, Jesus dwelt at Nazareth, un-honored and unknown, that He might teach men how to live near God while discharging the humble duties of life. It was a mystery to angels that Christ, the Majesty of Heaven, should condescend, not only to take upon Himself humanity, but to assume its heaviest burdens and most humiliating offices. This He did in order to become like one of us, that He might be acquainted with the toil, the sorrows, and fatigue of the children of men, that He might be better able to sympathize with their distresses and understand their trials.

“Those who divorce religion from their business are reprov'd by the example of Jesus. Hidden away among the hills of Nazareth, yet having such claims upon Heaven that He could command the entire angel host, He was a simple car-

“ Christ dignified the humble employments of life, by occupying a menial condition. ”



penter, working for wages, and living a godly life in the face of all discouragements.” —*The Health Reformer*, October 1, 1876

Jesus’ life shows that no matter how humble the task, it holds value in God’s eyes. We should perform our daily duties with contentment, knowing that honorable work—whether seen or unseen—can bring us closer to God. The status or position one occupies does not determine their worth or ability to connect with God. So we should bring our faith to our work. We should work knowing that God is watching us. And that is when our daily tasks can be a missionary and ministry for God’s name.

“It requires much more grace and stern discipline of character to work for God in the capacity of mechanic, merchant, lawyer, or farmer, carrying the precepts of Christianity into the ordinary business of life, than to labor as an acknowledged missionary in the open field, where one’s position is understood, and half its difficulties obviated by that

very fact. It requires strong spiritual nerve and muscle to carry religion into the work-shop and business office, sanctifying the details of everyday life, and ordering every worldly transaction according to the standard of a Bible Christian.

“Jesus, in His thirty years of seclusion at Nazareth, toiled and rested, ate and slept, from week to week and from year to year, the same as His humble contemporaries. He called no attention to Himself as a marked personage, yet He was the world’s Redeemer, the adored of angels, doing, all the time, His Father’s work, living out a lesson that should remain for humanity to copy to the end of time.

“This essential lesson of contented industry in the necessary duties of life, however humble, is yet to be learned by the greater portion of Christ’s followers. If there is no human eye to criticise our work, nor voice to praise or blame, it should be done just as well as if the Infinite One Himself were personally to inspect it. We should be as



He was doing God's service just as much when laboring at the carpenter's bench as when working miracles for the multitude.

faithful in the minor details of our business, as we would be in the larger affairs of life.

“God is testing and proving us by our daily lives, watching the development of our characters, weighing our moral worth. Those who slight the spirit of the Word of God in their business life, as carpenters, lawyers, and merchants, are unfaithful in matters of eternal interest, since it is the *life* that indicates the spiritual advancement, and registers upon the Book of God the unchangeable figures of the future. The angels are mournfully inscribing a fearful record of slighted duties and neglected opportunities against many who make exalted professions. Those who are unfaithful in little things, cannot be entrusted with the true riches of the kingdom.” —*The Health Reformer*, October 1, 1876

The Value of Home/Work Life

Why did Jesus wait so long before starting His ministry? Why is the Bible silent about this period? It is because Jesus regarded the simple daily life of a carpenter as just as necessary as His life as the Messiah. Only true Christians in family and work can be true Christians in public ministry. This does not mean that public ministry is not important. Simply, the Bible teaches us that they are equally significant in God's eyes.

“Jesus is our example. There are many who dwell with interest upon the period of His public ministry, while they pass unnoticed the teaching of His early years. But it is in His home life that He is the pattern for all children and youth. The Saviour condescended to poverty, that He might teach how closely we in a humble lot may walk with God. He lived to please, honor, and glorify His Father in the common things of life. His work began in consecrating the lowly trade of the craftsmen who toil for their daily bread. He was doing God's service just as much when laboring at the carpenter's bench as when working miracles for the multitude. And every youth who follows Christ's example of faithfulness and obedience in

His lowly home may claim those words spoken of Him by the Father through the Holy Spirit, ‘Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth.’ Isaiah 42:1.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 74

“What life was that of Christ? He was just as certainly fulfilling His mission as the Pattern Man when toiling as a carpenter, and hiding the great secret of His divine mission from the world, as when He trod the foaming, white-capped billows on the sea of Galilee, or when raising the dead to life, or when dying [as] man's sacrifice upon the cross that He might lift up the whole race to a new and perfect life. Jesus dwelt long at Nazareth, unhonoured and unknown, that the lesson in His example might teach men and women how closely they may walk with God in even the common course of daily life. How humiliating, how rude and homely was this condescension of the Majesty of heaven, that He might be made one of us. He drew the sympathy of all hearts by showing Himself capable of sympathizing with all. The men of Nazareth in their questioning doubts, asked, ‘Is this not the carpenter, the son of Joseph and Mary?’

“Heaven and earth are no wider apart today than when common men of common occupation met angels at noonday, or when on Bethlehem's plains shepherds heard the songs of the heavenly host as they watched their flocks by night. It is not the seeking to climb to eminence that will make you great in God's sight, but it is the humble life of goodness, of fidelity, that will make you the object of the heavenly angels' special guardianship. The Pattern Man, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, took upon Himself our nature, and lived nearly thirty years in an obscure Galilean town, hidden away among the hills. All the angel host was at His command, yet He did not claim to be anything great or exalted. He did not attach Professor to His name to please Himself. He was a carpenter, working for wages, a servant to those for whom He labored, showing that heaven may be very near us in the common walks of life,

and that angels from the heavenly courts will take charge of the steps of those who come and go at God's command.

"O, that the Spirit of Christ might rest upon His professed followers. We must all be willing to work and toil, for this is the lesson Christ has given us in His life. If you had lived for God in common things, doing your work purely and faithfully when there was no one to say it was well done, you would not be in your present position. Your life you could make faithful by good words wisely spoken, by kind deeds thoughtfully done, by the daily manifestation of meekness, purity, and love. In view of all the light you have had, I fear you have made your final move. You have given Satan every advantage." *-Letter 1, 1880*

So, if you have ever felt your life is insignificant, remember: Jesus sees it as significant. He was a carpenter.

Carpenter of Our Lives

The original Greek word for "carpenter" in the Bible (*tekton*) suggests He was a builder. He is, indeed, the builder—of our character, our church, His kingdom, and His gospel. He builds a dwelling place in our hearts, fulfilling the name Emmanuel, "God with us." His first recorded work in Scripture was the creation of the world—a house for humanity. Even now, He is building our eternal home: "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2-3

He is the builder of our lives. This building does not happen in a single day—it is a gradual process, brick by brick. Our daily lives—at home, at work—may seem small and insignificant. But let us remember: our Carpenter is steadily placing each brick. And we can be sure that the final result will be beautiful. Consider His architectural masterpieces—creation, redemption, love. The same hands that formed the universe are at work in your life.

After a long day at work, I used to feel that my time was wasted—spending hours on tasks unrelated to ministry, merely earning a living. I resented those moments. But it was then that the Bible's silence spoke the loudest to me. Jesus lived the same humble daily life as a carpenter for 90% of His earthly journey. It brought me great comfort to realize that today is just another brick in the architectural masterpiece that the greatest Carpenter is building. My dear brothers and sisters, what bricks are you adding to God's masterpiece in your life today?

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16

Amen.



Canadian Field
Newsletter

Canadian Field Conference 2025

The Canadian Field Conference was held in Toronto, ON, from August 1–3, 2025, under the inspiring theme, “Rekindling the Fire.” Throughout the event, multiple messages centered on this theme were shared, uplifting and encouraging all in attendance. During this blessed gathering, two precious souls publicly committed their lives to Christ through baptism. May the Lord richly bless these new members of His family and strengthen them in their walk of faith. Highlights, sermons and special music videos of the conference will soon be available on the official IMS Canada YouTube channel.

Photo Credits: Helen Marttinen







A Prayer's Cry Part 1

Based on 1 Samuel 1 and 2 / By Edda Tedford (BC)

It was again the time for the yearly sacrifice
Unto the LORD in Shiloh.
All the faithful of Israel came
to take part in the sacred rite
Of Moses's Ceremonial law.
There was a certain Ephratite,
Elkanah was his name,
Coming from mount Ephraim year by year
With his children, his two wives,
To receive God's blessings for their lives.
When with devotion celebrating the occasion,
He gave portions of meat to his family –
receiving it happily,
Except for one
(though receiving a worthy portion).
It was Hannah – one of the wives of Elkanah.
But she did not eat but weep –

she had no children,
For God had shut up her womb...
"What is wrong with me" she thought,
"why can I not Conceive?"
This was her constant grief.
Elkanah did not mind, he loved Hannah deeply,
Speaking To her tenderly:
"Am I not better than ten sons to thee?"

.....

How could he understand what it meant,
when a woman in Old Israel
could not bare children?
She was looked at
With suspicion like as being cursed;
Children were deemed to be a gift of God,

But a barren woman – shared this blessing not,
That was the worst ...

For there was the other wife Peninnah,
being pregnant
Every year, having sons and daughters.
Their joy and laughter there was painful
For Hannah's ears to hear.
And this Peninnah, the more children she had,
the prouder And haughtier she got –
looked down on Hannah as a woman
Of no worth, teasing her for days and days.
When every year to Shiloh they were coming,
The meaner, nastier her mocking to
Hannah was becoming.
How could she eat
while her mind was in grave torment
By this heinous, malicious, harassment?
Those cold, icy words were piercing her heart
As with arrows of hot iron.

It was enough!!! – she could bear no more –
weeping very sore
Hannah left the place now in great agony.
"I must plead with God once more,
Deeper, more earnest than before,
He is my only hope; He will hear me."

Hurrying to the Sanctuary, falling on her knees,
Tears streaming down her face, praying silently,
But her embittered soul cried out loudly
With impassioned intensity
in the urgency of her plea.
She vowed a vow and said:
"O LORD of hosts, if Thou indeed
Will look on the affliction of Thine handmaid,
and remember Me,
and will give Thine handmaid a man child,
Then will I give him unto the LORD
all the days of his life."
Never Heaven heard a prayer of
such ardency, surrender,
Intreating for a child so very deeply longed for –
Then to the Giver back would render –
That prayer Heaven will remember.

.....

Such heart wrenching vow only could evolve
In a soul so afflicted, a heart so sorely wounded
That it could dissolve
The very dream of

a long-cherished motherhood,
But now only for a moment would...

If only this reproach so cruel from the mouth
Of her rival Peninnah – being barren –
could be stopped,
Then peace and contentment would fill
the heart of Hannah
Holding no more resentment
towards this Peninnah.

.....

Eli the priest observed her mouth,
rebuking her for he heard No voice;
she must be a woman drunken in her vice.
But Hannah said: "I am not drunk, I am a woman
Of a sorrowful spirit, in the bitterness of my soul
Have I poured out my heart to God."
Eli then said graciously:
"Go in peace, and the God of Israel
Grant you the petition
you have asked from Him."
Comforted by these words
Hannah returned and did eat,
She no more did weep, was no more sad,
What made her husband very glad.

Next day the family rose early,
for to worship to be ready,
To receive God's blessings for the journey home,
With all those to Shiloh there had come.
With children small and older,
traveling took longer
In the mountainous terrain of mount Ephraim.
At their home in Ramah,
devout Elkanah with affection
Thanked God for His protection; all was well
Then the usual routines and scores set in.

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An amazing change came over Hannah,
she was cheerful, Joyous, never more depressed,
What left prying Peninnah's curiosity impressed.
For God remembered Hannah, she conceived,
she received
What she believed, then bore a son –
For Hannah – now a mother – a new life begun.
Amen.
To be continued.



Egypt



Italy



India



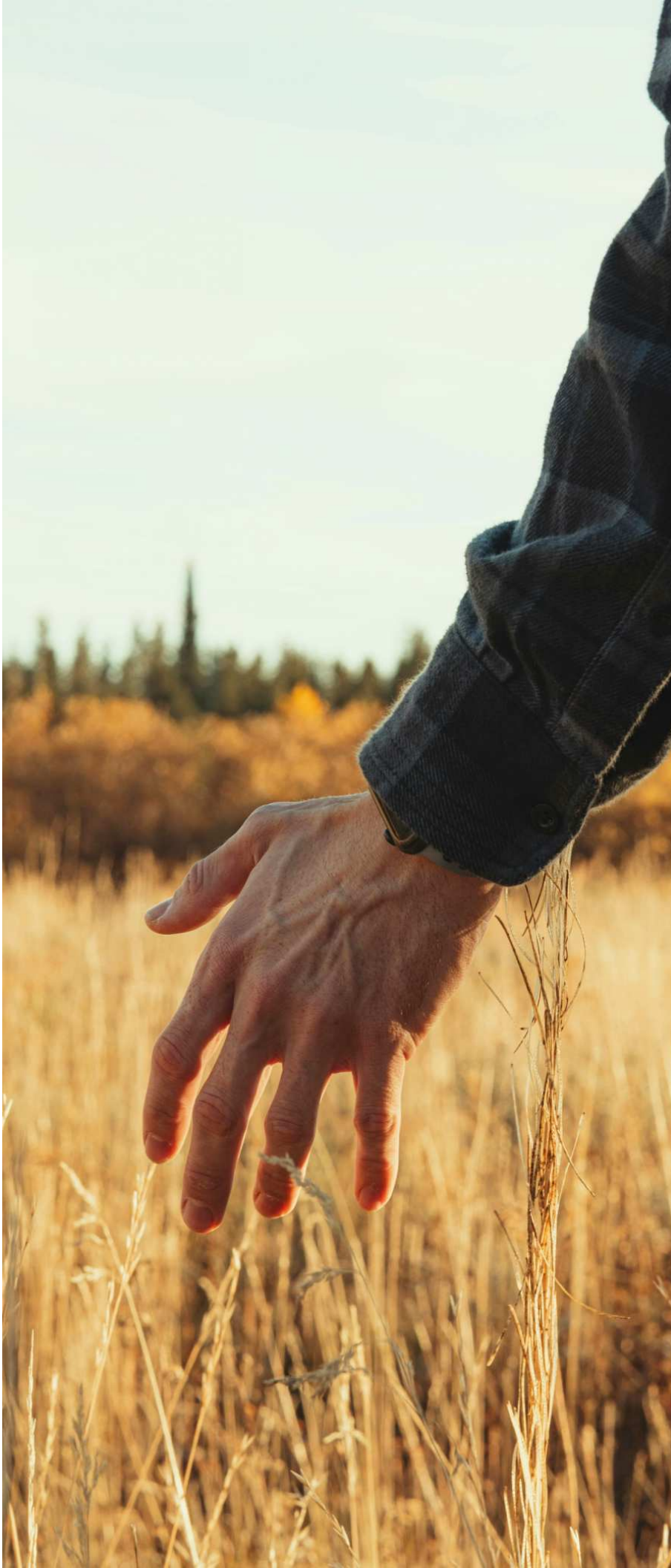
Estonia



The Philippines



Finland



“The condescension of Christ in behalf of men was a marvel to the angels. Redemption through Christ was to them a mystery of love and wisdom, and it absorbed their interest even more than had the work of creation. Such love amazed and enraptured them. It was so ardent, so matchless, so devoid of selfishness, they could not comprehend it. The creation of man in the beginning, the formation of the heavens and the earth, the beauty and glory with which the Creator had clothed all nature, had called forth the wonder and admiration of the universe of heaven, their reverence and love.”

–*The Review and Herald*,
July 15, 1909



**International
Missionary Society**

Seventh-day Adventist Church
Reform Movement