

No
Turning
Back

Pastor Terry S. Ross

NO TURNING BACK

Copyright © 1996

by Servants of the Saviour
Pastor Terry & Cathy Ross
P. O. Box 7277
Citrus Heights CA 95621-7277 USA

All Rights Reserved

Printed in USA

Contents

Chapter 1	Step 1 - Going to the Garden	1
Chapter 2	Step 2 - Going to the Trial	24
Chapter 3	Step 3 - Going to Calvary	41
Chapter 4	Step 4 - The Resurrection	58
Chapter 5	Step 5 - Going to the Upper Room	69
Chapter 6	Step 6 - Experiencing Pentecost	84
Chapter 7	Step 7 - Going Through Tribulation	98

INTRODUCTION

In the book *Prophetic Parallels*, this author has expressed his deepest concerns and convictions. *Prophetic Parallels* has taken a serious look at the downfall of the “chosen people,” what caused it, and its relevance to today’s “chosen people.” It has been said that those who forget the mistakes of the past are bound to repeat them, and with startling clarity and leaning heavily on the arm of Inspiration, these words have become painfully true — as demonstrated in *Prophetic Parallels*.

It is difficult to say that the book you are about to read is more important than *Prophetic Parallels* because without the foundation and understanding of the message contained in that book, most Adventists will certainly be lost. However, one cannot gain the final victory without equally understanding and experiencing what is to be found in *No Turning Back*.

It is with the intent of continued invitation through contemplation and challenge, therefore, that we turn ourselves to the study of the final path to heaven. We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy that there is much to be learned by reviewing with soberness the events surrounding the closing scenes of our precious Saviour’s life.

There is no doubt that this movement, the Seventh-day Adventist movement, has now entered into the shaking time. This time is a time of the experience to be found in the inspired chapter of Ezekiel 8, and will find its final fulfillment in chapter nine of the same book. This truth should awaken us to the reality that we, as Seventh-day

Adventists, are in the day of our visitation — a most solemn time, one in which will be determined whether you, whether I, will be counted worthy of God's kingdom.

The fact that God loves us so much is the reason He would have us recognize that we have indeed entered into a time of *No Turning Back*. We must decide, all the way, if we are true Seventh-day Adventists or not. That decision, which can be made fully only in the chambers of a man's own heart, and which will be recorded by the God Who reads the hearts, will determine one's future — both the immediate and the eternal.

It is time for the Lord to come and He has put in process those things which will catapult the human race into the last great struggle between the powers of righteousness and those of evil.

For Adventists this has special meaning and it has purpose. In the last scenes of Christ's life, His death, and the experience of His disciples, we will discover the exact path we must travel if we are to find the golden streets of the city eternal. There can be no doubt that the Lord wants you there for He has already proven it in the supreme gift of the cross.

Now He unveils the map to this road called straight and narrow. Now is the time to discover and experience that blood-stained path and make your decision sure, for now is the time of *No Turning Back*.

Chapter 1

Step 1 Going to the Garden

I believe we are living in the very final stages of the probationary time of this world.

I believe in the not-too-distant future, the case of every human being will have been decided in the courts of heaven.

I believe judgment begins at the house of Israel from the top down.

I believe the shaking time has already commenced and will intensify.

I believe the Lord is telling us that this is the day of our visitation and that He has begun a program which means either life or death for every individual who claims to be Seventh-day Adventist. As in the ancient days of Israel, those who came to the understanding that they were indeed being visited by the Lord, spiritually connected with Him and were saved, so those who do the same now will find eternal security. But those, who like the majority in ancient times, allow their day of visitation to pass by, going on with life as usual, lost their lives, so today those who do not recognize this day or refuse to engage in the process which this book is all about, will be lost.

I have developed an overview of this process so we can see what the Lord is trying, right now, to do for His people and how important it is. Although not exhaustive by any stretch of the imagination, I think that by looking at this overview we can get a good and clear picture of the program. I have divided the program into seven parts or steps to more easily look at it and be better able to focus on one segment at a time.

As we take a look at the visit to the Garden from a

salvational point of view, we will find rich insights that will help the true student find the real lessons. I will not attempt to re-write the entire chapter in *Desire of Ages* or include all the Bible verses, but I hope you will make it a matter of further study when it's appropriate. We will take a look at some key texts however, to help us discover important truths.

When the Lord had Sister White write that it would be well for us to give much contemplation to the life of Christ and especially the scenes that lead up to Calvary, I think He was trying to give us an important key which will unlock the door to many present truths. Many have stated they want to be just like Jesus and most who have said that haven't a clue as to what it really means anymore than when Peter and the other disciples said they were willing to drink of the cup He was about to drink. But we will discover those who are saved out of this last generation will indeed follow in the footsteps of the Lord and drink of the cup if they will share in His crown.

JESUS ENTERS THE GARDEN...

“He had often visited this spot for meditation and prayer; but never with a heart so full of sorrow as upon this night of His last agony. Throughout His life on earth He had walked in the light of God's presence. When in conflict with men who were inspired by the very spirit of Satan, He could say, ‘He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.’ John 8:29.” DA 685

Jesus had a true relationship with His Father. He communicated with Him (prayer) and walked in the light (truth) of God's presence. But now He was entering in on the final phase and preparation for the ultimate sacrifice. Christ's decision time had come and so had His hour of temptation.

We read in Matthew 26:41 that we are to watch and pray. Christ knows that the hour of temptation will come. He

also knows as it is stated in the same verse that we have a great weakness in the flesh. Therefore He gives us the solution (the only one) that will give us success for this hour which is to have spiritual discernment (the watching) and prayer (communion or communication with God). Because of the time we are in and especially the time which is just before us, we must have these two things if we are to meet the hour of temptation and win. The “hour of temptation” — the word temptation means a test. Do you know of any test that Adventists will have to face in the near future? Are you aware that one of the greatest hours of temptation is with us, right now?

In Revelation 3:10 we see the Lord is still concerned about this hour of temptation. As a matter of fact, He is looking down the ages of time to our time in speaking of this hour of temptation and says “which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth.” Now do you think it might be important for us to know what that temptation is, when it is, and how we can defeat it?

RH 4/15/1890: “These words are important and solemn, and it would be profitable to us should we take them home with us, and search the Scriptures in reference to their true meaning. The hour of Temptation is to come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth; and although we do not wish to make a time of trouble for ourselves, nor do we wish to groan over trials in the future, still we should be so closely connected with God that we shall not fall under the temptation when it does come.”

EW 277: “The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work of this angel [the 4th] comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel’s message as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation which they are soon to meet. I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to

fearlessly proclaim the third angel's message.”

4SP 377: “Just before us is the `hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.’ [Rev. 3:10] ALL whose faith is not firmly established upon the word of God WILL BE deceived and overcome. But to those who earnestly seek a knowledge of the truth, thus doing what they can do to prepare for the conflict, the God of truth will be a sure defense.”

EW 254: “As the ministration of Jesus closed in the holy place, and He passed into the holiest, and stood before the ark containing the law of God, He sent another mighty angel with a third message to the world. A parchment was placed in the angel's hand, and as he descended to the earth in power and majesty, he proclaimed a fearful warning, with the most terrible threatening ever borne to man. This message was designed to put the children of God upon their guard, by showing them the hour of temptation and anguish that was before them. Said the angel, `They will be brought into close combat with the beast and his image. Their ONLY HOPE of eternal life is to remain steadfast. Although their lives are at stake, they must hold fast the truth.’”

GC 619: “Though God's people will be surrounded by enemies who are bent upon their destruction, yet the anguish which they suffer is not a dread of persecution for the truth's sake; they fear that every sin has not been repented of, and that through some fault in themselves they will fail to realize the fulfillment of the Saviour's promise: I `will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.’ If they could have the assurance of pardon they would not shrink from torture or death; but should they prove unworthy, and lose their lives because of their own defects of character, then God's holy name would be reproached.”

Brothers and sisters, you can see that those who get to

heaven, who go through the time ahead, will indeed pass through this hour of temptation. And as the quotation in 4SP above clearly states, if we have not the preparation beforehand, it is not that we MIGHT be deceived or MAY be — but WILL be. Do you realize most Adventists will never, as a matter of fact, refuse (and as a matter of bigger fact are right now in the process of refusing), to go through this vital preparation, and this is the very reason why you now have this book in your possession? It is one of the major reasons for writing this book.

I ask you this solemn question — which is more important for those who claim to be Seventh-day Adventist, the hour of temptation just ahead, or the preparation time which is already with us? Well, without making this too complicated, let me say that the majority who refuse the preparation will still come to the hour of temptation just like the minority but they will not pass the test!! So in that sense, which is more important — the preparation time or the temptation time?

GOD'S WRATH TO FALL

“Feeling how terrible is the wrath of God against transgression, He exclaims, `My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.’” DA 685

We need to understand the wrath of God will fall against transgression. God hates sin. We need to be truly sorry for our sin and learn to hate it because it kills. We need to understand in a very real sense that it not only killed the Son of God but it will also eternally kill us! With so many among us causing confusion along these lines it is to our advantage to understand more of God's wrath toward sin and those who refuse His pardon and remain in sin.

EW 36: “Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the Most Holy Place, until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could

not come until Jesus had finished His work in the Most Holy Place, laid off His priestly attire and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer; but pour out His wrath upon those who have rejected His truth.”

Maranatha 267: “When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image, and receive the mark will be poured out.”

TM 182: “Let not one soul think that he can hide from God’s wrath behind a lie, for God will strip from the soul the refuge of lies. The bolts of God’s wrath are soon to fall, and when He shall begin to punish transgressors, there will be no period of respite until the end. The storm of God’s wrath is gathering, and those **ONLY WILL STAND** who are sanctified through the truth in the love of God.”

SIN BECOMES HATEFUL

Signs of the Times 12/30/1889: “The redeemed will ever be vividly impressed with the hateful character of sin, as they behold Him who died for their transgressions.”

Youth Instructor 6/28/1900: “Not that sin might become righteousness, and transgression of the law a virtue, did Christ die. He died that sin might be made to appear exceedingly sinful, the hateful thing that it is.”

The Faith I Live By 104: “Sin, so hateful to His sight, was heaped upon Him until He groaned beneath its weight. The despairing agony of the Son of God was so much greater than His physical pain, that the latter was hardly felt by Him.”

We must take note that the God we claim to serve Who IS Love, the very essence of what love means, its very source, has perfect hatred toward sin. He will (not may)

destroy it and sinners who refuse escape from it in the gift of His Son. This earth has rarely witnessed God's wrath as it speaks of in the time just ahead. The closest thing to it would have to be the flood.

But the flood came from God during a time of relative peace and comparatively speaking there was no strife between nations, etc. The time ahead when God's wrath will be poured out will be much different. This is why we desperately need to recognize that we are living in the day of our visitation and preparation. We are going to have one last "shot" at this and those who don't get it right won't ever get it right.

DIVINE JUSTICE

"As the substitute and surety for sinful man, Christ was suffering under divine justice. He saw what justice meant. Hitherto He had been as an intercessor for others; now He longed to have an intercessor for Himself." DA 686

We need to understand that divine justice is real and what it means.

GC 465: "Affiliated with the dangers already named is the danger of underestimating the justice of God. The tendency of the modern pulpit is to strain out the divine justice from the divine benevolence, to sink benevolence into a sentiment rather than to exalt it into a principle. The new theological prism puts asunder what God joins together."

PK 691: "As the substitute and surety for sinful man, Christ was to suffer under divine justice. He was to understand what justice meant. He was to know what it means for sinners to stand before God without an intercessor."

Lift Him Up 158: "Every offense against God, however minute, is set down in the reckoning. And when the sword of justice is taken in hand, it will do the work that

was done to the Divine Sufferer. Justice will strike; for God's hatred for sin is intense and overwhelming."

Did you read the quotations above very carefully? Did you take some time to really contemplate what's being said? The reason for asking is not that I wish to offend anyone but rather for the reason found in the first quote, GC 645. You see where it says: "The new theological prism puts asunder what God joins together?" Here is where the danger really lies. For the last few decades the "new theological prism" has camped in the Adventist pulpits and the majority of professed Adventists don't understand what the truth of the Bible says on some of these topics. The divine justice of God will surely fall, and understanding what that means will help to save your life!

If you look in the same quote for just another moment you will understand better through what medium our understanding has been either blurred or obliterated. You see where it speaks of sentiments rather than principles? The devil has lowered the meaning of divine justice in our understanding and how we judge it by the way we feel not by what God says. This is proven over and over in the words of those who say things such as "I just don't feel that God would keep me out of heaven for such a small thing" or "I feel that God *loves* me too much to keep me out of heaven for that," or "I just don't feel convicted on that yet."

For the most part, all this has been calculated by the devil to prevent us from believing the plain truth and to keep us clinging to our sins long enough until the preparation time has passed and we are totally unready and eternally lost. Yes, we are to have feelings, but they are always to be under the higher powers of heavenly principles. All the warm feelings in the world will not change one jot of the truth. The only reason our feelings are not in harmony with the high principles of God is because we have become perverted by the enemy of all souls. It is **ONLY** those who, through God's help,

realize this truth who can even hope to be saved in the end. Our need is much bigger than we realize and our problems much greater than we care to admit.

SEPARATION — UNITY

“As Christ felt His unity with the Father broken up,...”
DA 686

Sin causes separation from God and there can be no unity among those who are truly following Him and those making only a profession.

Adventist Home 179: “The secret of true unity in the church and in the family is not diplomacy, not management, not a superhuman effort to overcome difficulties — though there will be much of this to do — but union with Christ.”

Last Day Events 175: “As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. Some who are now ready to take up weapons of warfare in times of real peril make it manifest that they have not built upon the solid rock; they will yield to temptation. Those who have great light and precious privileges but have not improved them will, under one pretext or another, go out from us.”

GC 45: “If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference, and even war.”

Of course we could speak about separation and unity for a long time. There is such a push for unity — but what kind? The unity being called for is nothing more than blind, unquestioning loyalty, from man to man, which is satanic. This unity will indeed take place! So we must be careful that when struggling for unity, we are not pushing ourselves into the wrong camp — the one that will achieve it, though for a short time. Sometimes I just cringe when I see folks arguing themselves right into the “unity” the devil is working so hard for.

Do you know that we have a need much greater than unity? This need fulfilled will bring the unity that Christ prayed for and will indeed be answered. This is the group that you really wish to be unified with. The great need we must allow the Lord to fill in us in order to gain the unity we long for is humility. Oh, I hear some among us today who talk “big.” To hear them speak, you would think they are the only ones on earth the Lord is working through or who are being persecuted. Maybe you know some who fit this scenario. But history has shown, inspiration brings this truth forward and the future will reveal, in God’s army these folks are mere cowards in disguise. I’ve seen it happen, myself. It really doesn’t take much for the fruits to bud, blossom and ripen. Sometimes all it takes is a simple, honest and straightforward challenge. Then the root of the tree is exposed.

When we seek the advantages and deep, positive attributes of Christ-filled humility, it is then and only then that God can really work with us in a broader scope. Humility is what really provides the recipient with power and strength that cannot possibly come from within nor can one stand up to any kind of real challenge without it. Those whom God brings together, in His own time, will have this humility which comes from Jesus. Humility is the express opposite of pride, which is a killer. One acts like strength, the other IS strength, deriving its power from the Source of all enduring strength. But we can only know this if we seek it with all our hearts and use this preparation time wisely. Are you willing to do this?

DISCOURAGEMENT

“Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan’s kingdom, and would nevermore be one with God.” DA 687

Satan always attempts to discourage by placing his own attributes on the character of God.

Our High Calling 85: “Do not for a moment acknowledge Satan’s temptations as being in harmony with your own mind. Turn from them as you would from the adversary himself. Satan’s work is to discourage the soul. Christ’s work is to inspire the heart with faith and hope. Satan seeks to unsettle our confidence. He tells us that our hopes are built upon false premises rather than upon the sure immutable word of Him who cannot lie.”

2SM 397: “Nothing in this world is so dear to God as His church. With jealous care He guards those who seek Him. Nothing so offends God as the servants of Satan to strive to rob His people of their rights. The Lord has not forsaken His people. Satan points to the mistakes that they have made, and tries to make them believe that thus they have separated themselves from God. Evil angels seek in every way to discourage those who are striving for victory over sin. They hold up before them their past unworthiness, and represent their case as hopeless. But we have an all-powerful Redeemer. ... He was endowed with power to minister to all who would accept Him as their Redeemer, to succor [which means to come to the aid of] the repentant ones who are convinced of the sinfulness of sin.”

HUMAN BETRAYAL

“And what was to be gained by this sacrifice? How hopeless appeared the guilt and ingratitude of men! In its hardest features Satan pressed the situation upon the Redeemer: The people who claim to be above all others in temporal and spiritual advantages have rejected You. They are seeking to destroy You, the foundation, the center and seal of the promises made to them as a peculiar people. One of Your own disciples, who has listened to Your instruction, and has been among the foremost in church activities, will betray You. One of Your most zealous followers will deny You. All will forsake You. Christ’s whole being abhorred the thought. That those whom He had undertaken to save, those whom He loved so much, should unite in the plots of Satan, this

pierced His soul.” DA 687

We must realize and deal wisely with the harsh realities of human betrayal and continue to work and love.

5T 136: “When God’s wrath is poured out upon the earth, who will then be able to stand? Now is the time for God’s people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battle of the Lord when champions are few — this is to be our test. At this time we must gather the warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason.”

Even now we can feel the night approaching when the warmth of human friendship may be very rare. I can’t speak for everyone but over the last several years, Cathy and I have felt the sting of betrayal more than once from those who have called us friend. I’m not speaking of needed rebuke or a strong piece of advise, no, no. I’m speaking of the type of betrayal that owes itself to unfairness, gossip in its true sense, and vengeance, the type that is not in defense of God’s truth but man’s lack of it.

We must quickly learn to appreciate what it really means to take on the name of Seventh-day Adventist. As we do we will understand the choice we are making and, as did Paul, realize what all that choice entails, which is a lot! It means that we will be betrayed! It means we will be hated, if faithful. It means that our hearts will ache more than we thought possible. But it also means victory! It means that we have chosen the highest calling and privilege ever extended to modern man. It means heaven in the end. But it is a total package, my dear friend, and we must have all of it willingly or none of it. In the choice of being a faithful Adventist we take the blood,

sweat, and tears, along with the peace, joy, and crown. This is what it means to be one of the true and the faithful. Are you ready to make a choice that means you willingly place yourself in harm's way? I pray that you are. Jesus died and showed the way so that you could and would.

FEELING AND PRINCIPLE

“O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.’ Yet even now He adds, `Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.’” (Matt. 26:39) DA 687

We must be honest with our feelings but keep them in submission to God's will. (See Mark 14:36)

Our High Calling 103: “You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. If you fight the fight of faith with all your power, you will conquer. Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable...”

RH 9/17/1895: “The foolish virgins do not represent those who are hypocritical. They had a regard for truth, they advocated the truth, they were intending to go forth to meet the bridegroom. They are attached to those who believe the truth, and go with them, having lamps, which represent a knowledge of the truth. When there was a revival in the church, their feelings were stirred; but they failed to have oil in their vessels, because they did not bring the principles of godliness into their daily life and character. They did not fall upon the rock of Christ Jesus, and permit their old nature to be broken up.”

Have you had an experience like I have? You have been somewhere and heard words that really touched your heart. You felt the invitation of the Lord and right at that moment you truly wanted to go all the way with the Lord. But within a few hours or days, the feeling subsided and

the initial invitation was little regarded or ignored.

You see, we must come to a place of sincere resolve not based on any feeling but on the principles of salvation and the high standards of true godliness. Then as we willfully place whatever feelings, “good” or “bad” under the total care of godly principles, we will find a peace that comes along with successful living such as Jesus had. We must permit the old nature, the lower passions, to be broken on the Rock, in order for Him to restore unto us the health of practical godliness. Without this we are doomed, eternally doomed to repeat our failures and suffer the consequences in the end with the father of all failure.

BEING HUMBLE AND SELF-DISTRUSTING

“Just before He bent His footsteps to the garden, Jesus had said to the disciples, ‘All ye shall be offended because of Me this night.’ They had given Him the strongest assurance that they would go with Him to prison and to death. And poor, self-sufficient Peter had added, ‘Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.’ Mark 14:27, 29. But the disciples trusted to themselves. They did not look to the mighty Helper as Christ had counseled them to do. Thus when the Saviour was most in need of their sympathy and prayers, they were found asleep. Even Peter was sleeping. And John, the loving disciple who had leaned upon the breast of Jesus, was asleep. Surely, the love of John for his Master should have kept him awake.” DA 688-689

We must learn to be humble and self-distrusting.

RH 12/01/1885: “If poor, fallen men would walk carefully and humbly with God, distrusting self and confiding wholly in Jesus, such a light and power would be revealed in the world as would be convincing to unbelievers.”

Now we have already touched on being humble but part of that process is not trusting ourselves, outside of

God's counsel, at all. Ever since the fall in the garden of Eden we have been at enmity against God. Our hearts are naturally evil and the Bible says they are desperately wicked. To understand or accept anything less than this is to be self-deceived and to block our understanding and spiritual progress. Because of this harsh reality we must not trust ourselves but live and think in the safe confines of God's Word. To be self-distrusting is a major step in the right direction toward our progress along the garden path which leads to spiritual restoration.

RELIEVING OTHERS

“Again He had felt a longing for companionship, for some words from His disciples which would bring relief, and break the spell of darkness that well-nigh overpowered Him.” DA 690

We should be sensitive to the plight of humanity and seek to relieve the suffering of our brothers and sisters when they are in conflict with the enemy.

Our High Calling 102: “They [those in the school of Christ] are to represent Christ. They are to help one another to become worthy of admission into the higher school. They are to help one another to be pure and noble, and to cherish a true idea of what it means to be a child of God. They are to speak encouraging words. They are to lift up the feeble hands and strengthen the feeble knees.”

One thing that has bothered me for some time is that many are giving up far too soon on others who are not “keeping pace.” Now that is not to say that there are not times whenever our part is over, when trying to help someone else we have been brought to a place where we can no longer be the one to help, for our help has been totally rejected. I am speaking more in broader terms. So many are rushing to judgment and doing things like closing probation on people, both outright or, if not saying it verbally, at least demonstrating by how they are acting. The fact of the matter is that very, very few of us

have kept pace with where we should or could have been. All of us are guilty with few exceptions. As human nature would have it, however, when the light finally comes on for us, all too often, we rush out and tell everyone else in the very harshest tones how stupid they are for not seeing the truth which lies directly in front of them. How easily we forget that we too have been “stupid” for so many years.

This should not be understood to confine us to places or in situations where the Lord has not told us to remain or go, but neither should we generally be so willing to bring the final curtain down (the job God has reserved unto Himself) on everyone who doesn't “see the light” that we now see. Although we are running out of precious time and we should be concerned, deeply concerned for what is happening and what is going to happen to the majority within our own ranks, we need to follow the example of Noah. He preached in love right up until the time the door of the ark was closed. We must do what we do because we wish to save — not because we wish to destroy. We must ask the Lord to help us in our search for the same compassion toward others that we have sought for ourselves. When we have opportunity we must strive to let others know that we do and say the things we do because we have a deep love and concern for them and their eternal welfare — not because we can “prove” that they are wrong and we are right. Admittedly most will never recognize this love and compassion anyway, but that will not matter to the true and faithful. In context, they will seek pure motives of love regardless of whether it's recognized or not.

DYING TO SELF—GIVING OUR LIVES FOR OTHERS

“But now the history of the human race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made.

He will save man at any cost to Himself.” DA 690 & 693

We must be willing to sacrifice ourselves (dying to self) for the lives of others. We must die to ourselves today in order to give our lives for the eternal welfare of lost humanity.

Signs of the Times 11/21/1892: “Whatever may be our temperament, we are to form a character after the divine pattern; we have no excuse for retaining the mold and superscription of our nature; for Christ has died that we may have His mold and superscription. We cannot retain self and yet be filled with the fullness of God. We must be emptied of self. If heaven is gained by us at last, it will be only through the renunciation of self, and the receiving of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified, and the vacuum supplied with the Spirit and power of God. Are we willing to pay the price required of us for eternal life? Are we ready to sit down and count the cost, and conclude that heaven is worth the sacrifice of dying to self, of having our will brought into perfect conformity with the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God will not be manifested upon us. When we present our emptied nature to God, He will by His Holy Spirit supply the vacuum made by the renunciation of self, and give us of His fullness. The Lord would not have us perish. He would have us consecrate to His service all there is of us; for He desires to bless us more than we desire to be blessed. He would have us abide in Christ, receive His blessing, and diffuse it to others while we live, that we may enjoy a blessed eternity. Life is short, but eternity is endless.”

What a spiritual mouthful!! I would invite you to take several minutes and go back over carefully the multifaceted invitations of the last quote. I have heard it said many times that salvation is free, and so it is, but... In the sense that we cannot do anything to earn or merit salvation (just the opposite is true), salvation is a free

gift of God. But I can assure you, it will cost you everything you have. If we are not willing to sacrifice everything, no matter how minute, then salvation will evade us.

But the salvation question goes much deeper and broader in its boundaries than just one's person. What we do with the question — are we willing to lay down ourselves in order to have it — also touches the lives of others. In order to help others along the way, in order to have an influence that is a savor of life unto life, we must be willing to place every cherished possession on the altar of sacrifice. Anything less than total sacrifice will have a tendency to lead others astray because of the self-protecting bias that comes with the lack of it.

Today we see a woeful lack of power in the movement that calls itself, rightfully so, the chosen movement of God for these last days — spiritual Israel. Today we see lots of programs, lots of activity, lots of failure and lots of spiritual shallowness. The reason is simple. We, as a people, have not laid it all on the altar. When that is done, the Heavenly Father will pour out His blessing, the gift of the Holy Spirit, in unmeasured portions. Make no mistake about it, it will happen! You must ask yourself this all important question: Am I satisfied with the status quo? Do I wish to be in the group that this blessing and privilege will come to? Do I want to be a real part of seeing thousands come to Christ as a direct result of my positive self-surrender on the altar of Jesus' love. What a glorious, eternal reality this will be for those who make this decision in the positive.

STANDING ALONE

“The Saviour trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him.” DA 693

We must be willing to go it alone if necessary. Now or in the future.

AA 199: “In his ministry, Paul was often compelled to

stand alone. He was specially taught of God and dared make no concessions that would involve principle. At times the burden was heavy, but Paul stood firm for the right. He realized that the church must never be brought under the control of human power. The traditions and maxims of men must not take the place of revealed truth. The advance of the gospel message must not be hindered by the prejudices and preferences of men, whatever might be their position in the church.”

I am thoroughly convinced that the Lord is in the process of showing us the need to get off the arm of flesh and onto the arm of Omnipotence. It is startling to see how many of the professed sheep of God blindly follow wolves who parade themselves as shepherds. This phenomenon is down right shocking when we see it in those who have left one group “because of principle” to turn right around and demonstrate the same blindness in their present situation, dumping the very “principles” they say are the reason they left their former situation.

As was demonstrated in the lives of Jesus, Paul, and many others throughout history, living by principle will indeed call upon us to stand alone, at times. Because we are so prone to wish to be popular and liked among our peers, it is only these principles and strength from their Author that can protect us against our natural blindness toward human acceptance. It will be seen in a very short time that this wilful blindness has been purchased at the highest cost — eternal life. Do we really wish to place our popularity with man above that of God? Most will. The marvelous truth is that Adventism offers us the eyesight that sees beyond these smoke screens of deception and provides us with the clear light needed for optimum vision. Praise God!!

COUNTING THE COST

“Christ’s agony did not cease, but His depression and discouragement left Him. The storm had in nowise abated, but He who was its object was strengthened to meet its fury. He came forth calm and serene. A

heavenly peace rested upon His bloodstained face.” DA 694

We need to enter the conflict with an understanding of what the conflict means. We need to learn with a clear knowledge the lot we have chosen as Adventist Christians and learn to appreciate it as did Paul if we hope to find success.

In Heavenly Places 20: “Conversion is a change of heart, a turning from unrighteousness to righteousness. Relying upon the merits of Christ, exercising true faith in Him, the repentant sinner receives pardon for sin. As he ceases to do evil and learns to do well, he grows in grace and in the knowledge of God. He sees that in order to follow Jesus he must separate from the world, counting the cost, he looks upon all as loss if he may but win Christ. He enlists in His army and bravely and cheerfully engages in the warfare, fighting against the natural inclinations and selfish desires and bringing the will into subjection to the will of Christ. Daily he seeks the Lord for grace, and he is strengthened and helped. Self once reigned in his heart, and worldly pleasure was his delight. Now self is dethroned, and God reigns supreme. His life reveals the fruit of righteousness. The sins he once loved he now hates. Firmly and resolutely he follows in the path of holiness. This is genuine conversion...”

The reason Ancient Israel as a nation was lost is the same reason Modern Israel as a nation will be lost. They *reluctantly* accepted their calling from God. It is demonstrated in the continual murmuring and complaining of Ancient Israel that they “served” God with a selfish heart. Their motives, at best, were not pure and often they were openly selfish, serving God for what they could get out of it, not from what God could get out of them.

Today Modern Israel, Adventism in the general sense, is following in the exact pattern of this established truth.

As this is unveiled, can honest examination expect the outcome of Modern Israel to be any thing different than in the ancient counterpart? Even the denial of this obvious truth by the majority is but another evidence of its validity!

If we, as individuals (for the majority will never come to this understanding), are to break this inherited mold, then we need to closely examine why we are called to be Seventh-day Adventists and what that means. After we have this information and choose to accept it in its most glorious and yes, most terrible sense, then we are to accept the lot of true Adventism. This lot will prove, in a special sense to this last generation, to be the toughest on the planet. We are not called to go into it ignorantly or foolishly but with an intelligent resolve knowing what we are choosing but choosing it anyway. It is those who make this type of commitment that will see it through. All others will be swept away by the flood of woe to come. Only as we plant ourselves, through choice, with the help of God, deep into the Rock of our salvation will we be able to stand all the way through to the end of the unrelenting storm.

ENDURING UNTIL THE END

“Judas the betrayer did not forget the part he was to act. When the mob entered the garden, he had led the way, closely followed by the high priest. To the pursuers of Jesus he had given a sign, saying, ‘Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He: hold Him fast.’ Matt. 26:48. Now he pretends to have no part with them. Coming close to Jesus, he takes His hand as a familiar friend. With the words, ‘Hail, Master,’ he kisses Him repeatedly, and appears to weep as if in sympathy with Him in His peril... The official dignity of the Jewish leaders had not prevented them from joining in the pursuit of Jesus. His arrest was too important a matter to be trusted to subordinates; the wily priests and elders had joined the temple police and the rabble in following Judas to Gethsemane. What a company for those dignitaries to unite with — a mob that was eager for excitement, and

armed with all kinds of implements, as if in pursuit of a wild beast!” DA 695 & 696

The heart of a true Adventist will break a thousand times before the conflict is over. Many who have claimed to be “friends” may betray us and certainly those who have called us brethren will. It is indeed horrible to realize that those who call themselves Seventh-day Adventists but have not been sanctified by the truth will be the very ones who play a primary role in seeking to destroy those who have given their lives completely to Jesus.

5T 463: “The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity, she will have to do in a terrible crisis, under most discouraging, forbidding, circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld, must be given under the fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith. And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith, and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending. These apostates will then manifest the most bitter enmity, doing all in their power to oppress and malign their former brethren, and to excite indignation against them. This day is just before us. The members of the church will individually be tested and proved. They will be placed in circumstances where they will be forced to bear witness for the truth. Many will be called to speak before councils and in courts of justice, perhaps separately and alone. The experience which would have helped them in this emergency they have neglected to obtain, and their souls are burdened with remorse for wasted opportunities and neglected privileges.”

In the garden experience, Step 1, we must know what the question is — How far will you follow Me?

We must know what our choice is — You must go all the way or you have no part in Me.

We must understand what the consequence of our choice is and accept it as God's will for us.

We must have our understanding deepened and practical application broadened concerning the verse found in John 15:13. The decision made in the garden process means everything to our personal salvation and will surely affect the salvation of others as well.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13

In a personal and global sense the garden experience and our reaction to its invitation will be the first deciding factor in whether or not future success is ours. With it we can move steadily forward to Step 2 — the trial. Without it we cannot possibly hope for success and will indeed not find it.

In finding our Lord we must follow Him in the garden experience. We must allow ourselves to be asked the questions that He was asked, and we must answer as He answered. It is the wish of our Heavenly Father that we will pass through this experience in full cooperation with Him, for He wants us to be with Him. He wants to give us the success which He gave to His Beloved Son.

Chapter 2

Step 2 Going to the Trial

SEE YOU IN COURT

“Christ was to be tried formally before the Sanhedrin; but before Annas He was subjected to a preliminary trial. Under the Roman rule the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence of death. They could only examine a prisoner, and pass judgment, to be ratified by the Roman authorities. It was therefore necessary to bring against Christ charges that would be regarded as criminal by the Romans. An accusation must also be found which would condemn Him in the eyes of the Jews.” DA 698-699

In the last days of this earth’s history, the apostates of the church will take a very active part in securing some sort of condemnation against those they hate — the true and faithful. They will find something that will be regarded in the eyes of the government to be a crime or criminal activity. We know at the end of all things, the nation will make laws that will appear religious in nature and this will make the job of apostate Adventists much easier. It really doesn’t matter if the conferences are winning cases in court or not. The fact they are taking other Adventists to court to protect their “religious rights” is proof enough that history is repeating itself.

INTIMIDATION AND FEAR

“Not a few among the priests and rulers had been convicted by Christ’s teaching, and only fear of excommunication prevented them from confessing Him.” DA 699

There are many among us and not a few among the leaders who are convicted that the Historic Adventist theology is indeed correct but, because of the price they would have to pay and their lack of faith, they continue to deny their Lord by not coming forward. In the very end there will be some who will, as did Nicodemus and Joseph bring forth their convictions and be mighty in

helping to finish the work but there will be many who will wait too long and be eternally lost.

While some are writing off those who are still in the conference, we are not. There may be some who have the mistaken idea that this book, for example, should only be shared with others who are making decisions as we are. But this would be a mistake. We must believe and have faith that God is not done with individuals and we should share this type of material with all who will take it, especially those in positions of influence. God will work mightily in the near future and some will be convinced and convicted through the medium of the printed page. We would encourage you to share copies of *Prophetic Parallels* and *No Turning Back* not only with those you know will read them but also with those who are in leadership positions. Then pray they will read this material with an open mind and a honest heart, that the Holy Spirit will draw very close to them.

CONDEMNED THROUGH DECEPTION

“He [Annas] thought to draw out some statement to prove that He was seeking to establish a secret society, with the purpose of setting up a new kingdom. Then the priests could deliver Him to the Romans as a disturber of the peace and a creator of insurrection.” DA 699

This is just the “crime” that the remnant will be accused of at the end of time. At first the United States (then followed by the rest of the world), will set up laws that will look good to the majority. This will be done under circumstances which have placed the nation and possibly the world under stress “to get back to God,” and this will be attempted in an effort as did Pharaoh of Egypt to rid himself of the plagues. As a result of the refusal by the small group of Sabbath keepers to honor these religious laws, their characters, words and actions will be maligned and placed in the worst light. There will be those who will twist not only the words of the true and faithful, making them say something they never said or intended, but their motives will receive that same deceptive treatment.

AN OPEN BOOK

“He had no secrets in regard to His purposes or doctrines.” DA 699

Just as Jesus did during His trial of severe test, the true and the faithful will endure hardship without soiling or hiding their beliefs. They will live as an open book and people will not be deceived by them. They will be open and honest in all that they do. It will be the rest of the world, especially those who are seeking their extermination, who will be working along deceptive channels and secret means and agendas.

BREAKING THEIR OWN RULES

“The midnight seizure by a mob, the mockery and abuse before He was condemned, or even accused, was their manner of work, not His. Their action was in violation of the law. Their own rules declared that every man should be treated as innocent until proved guilty. By their own rules the priests stood condemned.” DA 699

History is already repeating itself within the Seventh-day Adventist organization. Though many have been and are being disfellowshipped without a trial, the organization’s own church manual (red hard back 1989 edition) clearly states on page 164: “It is a fundamental principle of justice that every member has the right to be heard in his own defense, and to introduce evidence and produce witnesses in his own behalf. No church should vote to disfellowship a member under circumstances that deprive him of this right, if he chooses to exercise it. Due notice should be given by the church to the member under discipline of intention to try his case, thus giving him opportunity to appear in his own behalf.”

Unfortunately, however, as in the Ancient Adventist Conference system, there came a time when seeking basic justice was not the goal. The goal was seeking to sustain the authority of the priests, their support and agendas, at any cost. The days of fair play were long gone and the priests preyed on the naive people who continued to believe that whatever the priests said was

gospel. When Jesus came He held up not the “church manual” (the traditions of man-made rules, something He openly condemned) but God’s Holy Word as the yard stick of Christian standard. This infuriated the Conference so intensely that they killed the Son of God — God Himself. We need to take a good, hard, long look at past history and learn from it. There is a real and vital reason why the Lord has seen fit in these very last days to give us a prophet who was inspired to bring these things into crystal focus.

STAYING COOL UNDER FIRE

“He [Christ] spoke no burning words of retaliation. His calm answer came from a heart sinless, patient, and gentle, that would not be provoked.” DA 700

The work of those who love the Lord and those who don’t is very different. The very motives of these two classes are different. We need to understand that we speak words for the purpose of salvation not retaliation or destruction. Those who are of the opposite camp will be seen defending their own selves rather than defending the Word of God or His truth and His reputation. They are more interested in “proving” their own right to this or that than in defending the honor of the Lord. It will be seen that one group has the well-being of others in mind while the other group is out only to ultimately protect themselves and their own agendas.

UNITY — THE WRONG KIND

“When the council had assembled in the judgment hall, Caiaphas took his seat as presiding officer. On either side were the judges, and those specially interested in the trial. The Roman soldiers were stationed on the platform below the throne.” DA 703-704

In this bit of history we should realize that the apostate church and the world will be working together to bring a verdict of condemnation on God’s true and faithful people. We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy that those who once had great light but would not be converted and sanctified by it will be foremost in this work of

extermination and will go to the government seeking the needed power to carry out their plans. This has already started with the many lawsuits the organization has brought against others who are or have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist organization. Those who have not the faith of Jesus Christ cannot and will not depend on the Lord to protect that which is already His. Therefore they will always seek the needed power of enforcement from another source.

PEOPLE ARE WATCHING YOU

“The people compared the excited and malignant deportment of Annas and Caiaphas with the calm, majestic bearing of Jesus. Even in the minds of that hardened multitude arose the question, is this man of godlike presence to be condemned as a criminal?” DA 705

Although there will be many we have known and fellowshipped with who will stand against the true and the faithful, we should keep in mind that until probation closes the Holy Spirit can impress others of the truth as they watch the actions of those being condemned. Christ knew, as some of the people watched, they would realize later what had really taken place and still others would find out what had really happened and be convinced that He was the Messiah. We, too, must keep in mind that what we see in the present tense will not always be the final outcome. We must, through faith, look beyond today and trust that God will bring others to the kingdom through our persecution, just as He has throughout history.

HOW LOW CAN YOU GET?

“Early in His ministry Christ had said, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ In the figurative language of prophecy, He had thus foretold His own death and resurrection. ‘He spake of the temple of His body.’ John 2:19,21. These words the Jews had understood in a literal sense, as referring to the temple at Jerusalem. Of all that Christ had said, the priests could find nothing to use against Him save this. By

misstating these words they hoped to gain an advantage. The Romans had engaged in rebuilding and embellishing the temple, and they took great pride in it; any contempt shown to it would be sure to excite their indignation. Here Romans and Jews, Pharisees and Sadducees, could meet;...” DA 705-706

One thing we must understand more deeply is the fact that the enemy will certainly lie and distort our words in an attempt to wreck and destroy our influence. In the last several years Cathy and I have been in the work, I have seen this happen over and over again. Often, it has come from those we expected it to come from, but it has also come from those we would never have dreamed would have stooped to such measures clearly outside of truth and God’s counsel. It is imperative that we understand we are dealing with a foe who will stop at nothing to make our voices and work of none effect and also to discourage us and dishearten us to the point that we will give up.

BITING OUR TONGUES

“Patiently Jesus listened to the conflicting testimonies. No word did He utter in self-defense... Jesus held His peace.” DA 706

Christ did not seek to defend His own personal self. There is no account when Jesus defended Himself from a human stand-point, either verbally or physically. There are many today who are doing so and calling it a defense of God’s work — but their actions and demeanor reveal whether or not they have support for their behavior. There is in fact such a thing as righteous indignation; and the feeling and exhibition of this is proper in its rightful place. But this is far different from the self-justification that almost always follows a tirade of human invention although at times wrapped in the garb of priestly garments. Those who understand the truth will also understand the difference between that which is self-defense and that which is righteous indignation. One is truly needed — the other is sin. One is divine — the other human. One is anger toward the attack on

God's character — the other is anger toward the attack on human character. Many times righteous indignation, so called, is nothing more than a self-preserving, defense mechanism used by those who wish to justify and retain their sin, and who are seeking a sympathetic ear to console and support their weakness and sin.

SILENCE IS NOT ALWAYS GOLDEN

“At last, Caiaphas, raising his right hand toward heaven, addressed Jesus in the form of a solemn oath: ‘I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.’ To this appeal Christ could not remain silent. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until directly questioned. He knew that to answer now would make His death certain. But the appeal was made by the highest acknowledged authority of the nation, and in the name of the Most High. Christ would not fail to show proper respect for the law. More than this, His own relation to the Father was called in question. He must plainly declare His character and mission.” DA 706

Admittedly finding the balance between when to keep silent and when to speak can be difficult and takes study, prayer, and a close walk with the Lord. But the people who are largely silent today are so probably for the wrong reason. Most people today who profess to be Christians will not speak up because they wish to keep the peace. This in and of itself is honorable as the true and the faithful are seeking peace and that is, of course, the ultimate goal — eternal peace. However, the peace that most are trying to keep is their own!! The real reason for not speaking up in times when they know they should is “I don't want to offend anybody.” This answer although having some truth is mostly a lie because of the bigger truth which is evident.

The bigger truth and real reason why there's so much silence today is because the one who would speak out knows he will be attacked no matter how “nice” he is and this is the real, the bigger peace he wishes to maintain. In truth he is not looking out either for the reputation of

truth or God, but protecting his own!! So although he speaks the truth when he says he wishes to keep the peace and doesn't want to offend anybody, he is in fact, many times committing treason against God's government, denying his Lord before men and selfishly protecting his own peace, not wanting to pay the price of speaking up to defend the truth. And one last point is that he is not really keeping the peace with the other person by allowing them to continue to tear down truth and build up untruth which will eventually keep them out of the kingdom.

Although we need to develop wisdom with God's guidance in what the proper approach is in any given set of circumstances, we are not doing anyone any favor by our silence when we could share the truth with them, at least giving them opportunity to hear and consider it.

CONFESS OR DENY?

“Jesus had said to His disciples, ‘Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven.’ Matt. 10:32. Now by His own example He repeated the lesson.” DA 707

When Jesus was placed in a position where the truth of heaven was placed in question He did not hesitate to either defend or herald that truth even if it meant placing Himself at risk of harm or death. Jesus explained to His disciples very clearly that He expected them to do the same. He had called them to promote and, when appropriate, defend the truth so that others who were honestly searching for truth would have a real opportunity to find it. By His own example He lived out His own commission and told His disciples that if they were to be accounted faithful in heaven, they would be confessing Him before men on earth. He also warned them that those who chose not to confess but deny Him, He would not help in defending them before the Father. Presently we are living in the anti-typical day of atonement. To disqualify ourselves from the privilege of having the Son of God as our Attorney in the courts of

heaven, by our silent denial of God the Father, seems the ultimate price to pay for a very temporal peace now.

PLACING TRUST IN THE OVERSEER

“He [Christ] would be the judge of all the earth, and from His decision there could be no appeal. Then every secret thing would be set in the light of God’s countenance, and judgment be passed upon every man according to his deeds.” DA 708

One very important understanding it would be well to develop as we quickly approach the worst time this world has ever known is that Jesus is overseeing it all. This is the reason the last church is identified as having *the faith of Jesus*. We must develop such wisdom and faith from on high that we will continually factor in today’s battles, with all of its horrific substance, tomorrow’s victories and promises fulfilled. If we do not learn quickly to develop and live this *faith of Jesus* we will not make it through what’s coming upon the world. We must have the gold tried in the fire (faith and love) and the eyesalve (spiritual discernment) or we will allow the cares of this day to overwhelm us and we will surely fail to hit the ribbon at the end of the race.

CHURCH MANUAL — MAKING VOID THE LAW

“Everything worn by the priest was to be whole and without blemish. By those beautiful official garments was represented the character of the great antitype, Jesus Christ. Nothing but perfection, in dress and attitude, in word and spirit, could be acceptable to God. He is holy, and His glory and perfection must be represented by the earthly service. Nothing but perfection could properly represent the sacredness of the heavenly service. Finite man might rend his own heart by showing a contrite and humble spirit. This God would discern. But no rent must be made in the priestly robes, for this would mar the representation of heavenly things. The high priest who dared to appear in holy office, and engage in the service of the sanctuary, with a rent robe, was looked upon as having severed himself from God. By rending his garment he cut himself off from being a

representative character. He was no longer accepted by God as an officiating priest. This course of action, as exhibited by Caiaphas, showed human passion, human imperfection. By rending his garments, Caiaphas made of no effect the law of God, to follow the tradition of men. A man-made law provided that in case of blasphemy a priest might rend his garments in horror at the sin, and be guiltless. Thus the law of God was made void by the laws of men.” DA 709

There are actually two points which I feel are very significant. First, one of the largest condemnations Jesus brought against the professed leadership of His day was that they made void the law by teachings the traditions of men for the commandments of God. Let’s read a few words that aptly fit this bill today — “Depend on the Church Manual. The Church Manual represents both our church’s understanding of biblical principles of discipline and its wisdom hammered out through practice and discussion. It cannot be changed by anyone but the world church, meeting in General Conference Session. To ignore it is to set yourself above the collective wisdom of the world church and is an act of disloyalty to your church.” (1992 Minister’s Manual, page 169.) Here we have a prime example of making the law of God void by teaching the traditions of men for the commandments of God. God told us we should never have a church manual! In this case all the “collective wisdom” of the world church amounts to rebellion against God’s counsel. Peter said in such cases, “We ought to obey God rather than man.”

The second point is just as important and one that needs our close scrutiny. Let’s go back to the quote in DA 709 and look closely at just a few of the words. “By rending his garment [the ancient church manual said it was alright to do this] he cut himself off from being a representative character. He was no longer accepted by God as an officiating priest.” Many today are mistakenly thinking that they are honoring God by continuing to allow men to lead them — men who are presently disqualifying themselves from that role. They

are in fact dishonoring God and Jesus, who told His own disciples to get away from these blind guides or they too would be lost!! Those who continue to serve these men who are making the law of God void by teaching and enforcing the traditions of men for the commandments of God, will see one day too late that God's law, not man-made rules, are everlasting and lifegiving. The disciples never upheld one of the ancient professed leader's rules which was contrary to the counsel of the Master such as is so blatantly demonstrated by the existence of the SDA Church Manual, and so often demanded in it.

A RENDING OF THE HEART

“While in the guardroom, awaiting His legal trial, He [Christ] was not protected. The ignorant rabble had seen the cruelty with which He was treated before the council, and from this they took license to manifest all the satanic elements of their nature. Christ's very nobility and godlike bearing goaded them to madness. His meekness, His innocence, His majestic patience, filled them with hatred born of Satan. Mercy and justice were trampled upon. Never was [a] criminal treated in so inhuman a manner as was the Son of God. But a keener anguish rent the heart of Jesus; the blow that inflicted the deepest pain no enemy's hand could have dealt. While He was undergoing the mockery of an examination before Caiaphas, Christ had been denied by one of His own disciples.” DA 710

As stated earlier, it will be apostate Seventh-day Adventists who will be foremost in the extermination of their former brethren. The cruelty witnessed and experienced will be during a time of unprecedented fury against the true and faithful. But the one thing that will be the most heart rending of all is that there will be in some cases, probably many cases, a very close friend who will be the betrayer. Although this fact cannot be fully appreciated until the actual experience, it behooves us to prepare for these things the best we can. Some of us have already felt in a small degree what the future holds in this regard. The devil will use the ones who are

as close to us as they possibly can be in order to discourage or inflict physical and mental pain. We will surely need Jesus very close to us at that time.

NEITHER ASHAMED NOR A COWARD

“The disciple John, upon entering the judgment hall, did not try to conceal the fact that he was a follower of Jesus. He did not mingle with the rough company who were reviling his Master. He was not questioned, for he did not assume a false character, and thus lay himself liable to suspicion. He sought a retired corner secure from the notice of the mob, but as near Jesus as it was possible for him to be. Here he could see and hear all that took place at the trial of his Lord. Peter had not designed that his real character should be known. In assuming an air of indifference he had placed himself on the enemy’s ground, and he became an easy prey to temptation. If he had been called to fight for his Master, he would have been a courageous soldier; but when the finger of scorn was pointed at him, he proved himself a coward. Many who do not shrink from active warfare for their Lord are driven by ridicule to deny their faith. By associating with those whom they should avoid, they place themselves in the way of temptation. They invite the enemy to tempt them, and are led to say and do that of which under other circumstances they would never have been guilty. The disciple of Christ who in our day disguises his faith through dread of suffering or reproach denies his Lord as really as did Peter in the judgment hall.” DA 711-712

Perhaps too many of us have been guilty of running in where angels fear to tread and by so doing placed ourselves on enemy ground. Sometimes we have placed ourselves willingly in circumstances where the Lord did not send us and by doing this we have given the enemy an advantage. Before the smoke cleared we have ended up denying our Lord in one fashion or another. Let me give you just one small example of how this might happen. Let’s say that you go to a gathering where you really don’t have any business being. Maybe it’s a party not suited for Christians but you just thought you would

spend a little time, innocently, not really doing anything “wrong.” But when it came time to eat you knew you were in a crowd that would think you somewhat strange to be praying over the food so in order to save yourself a little embarrassment you just skipped the prayer or prayed with your eyes open so no one would notice. This same kind of desire to “fit in” at no expense to yourself is what got Peter into trouble. We can only learn by his story if we choose for certainly many of us cannot feel we are any better than Peter as we have made some of the same mistakes he made.

GOING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD

“He [Peter] pressed on in solitude and darkness, he knew not and cared not whither. At last he found himself in Gethsemane. The scene of a few hours before came vividly to his mind. The suffering face of his Lord, stained with bloody sweat and convulsed with anguish, rose before him. He remembered with bitter remorse that Jesus had wept and agonized in prayer alone, while those who should have united with Him in that trying hour were sleeping. He remembered His solemn charge, ‘Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.’ Matt. 26:41. He witnessed again the scene in the judgment hall. It was torture to his bleeding heart to know that he had added the heaviest burden to the Saviour’s humiliation and grief. On the very spot where Jesus had poured out His soul in agony to His Father, Peter fell upon his face, and wished that he might die. It was in sleeping when Jesus bade him watch and pray that Peter had prepared the way for his great sin.” DA 713

It would be to the great advantage of many of us if we were to understand and realize that we need to go back to the garden and be broken on the Rock. While the Lord is trying to get us to advance in the science of salvation, many of us continue to travel the same ground over and over, murmuring and complaining, either openly or silently, that we are not getting anywhere. Even if we don’t admit this to others, we know it deep within our hearts. We look at the future with some foreboding while at the same time trying to soothe our minds into

believing that the Lord will create some sort of miracle that will catapult us into some magical sanctified existence with all the faith anyone could ever want, but this is not how it works. There is a real and definite reason to fear the future if we are not working in cooperation with God now. It behooves us to be very honest with ourselves. If we wish to be successful in the Christian walk we certainly can be, but we must learn how to watch and pray in order to get on God's program which builds faith. Faith is the spiritual muscle that strengthens the soul to win the battle against a strong foe.

In order to build this muscle it must be exercised and the only way to exercise it is when the Lord prompts you to do something, and you know it's the Lord, DO IT and trust Him. This is the only way *the faith of Jesus* can be obtained by the Christian, and those of us who wish to be successful in the days ahead MUST obtain *the faith of Jesus*. Once we are genuine partners with God, then and only then will we have the peace that passes all understanding. Then our future is secure and fear will find no place in our hearts.

UNDERSTANDING OUR NEED TO LISTEN CLOSELY

"Christ knew the fiery ordeal through which they were to pass. He knew how Satan would work to paralyze their senses that they might be unready for the trial. Therefore it was that he gave them warning. Had those hours in the garden been spent in watching and prayer, Peter would not have been left to depend upon his own feeble strength. He would not have denied his Lord. Had the disciples watched with Christ in His agony, they would have been prepared to behold His suffering upon the cross. They would have understood in some degree the nature of His overpowering anguish. They would have been able to recall His words that foretold His sufferings, His death, and His resurrection. Amid the gloom of the most trying hour, some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness and sustained their faith."
DA 714

Just like the disciples we too have been given certain truths about the future events, but are we doing anything different than they did before their conversion? Are we using this time of preparation getting ready for the time when the whole world will be tested? Most professed Christians, not excluding those of the Adventist persuasion, will never make it to heaven's gates simply because the preparation time the Lord gave them was spent on things such as television or even making a living. Giving even those things which in and of themselves may not be sinful a priority higher than what is spiritually and eternally more important, will prove to be the eternal ruin of many.

It is very difficult for me to explain how sad and frustrated I sometimes feel when I sit in circles of people, sometimes close friends, and listen to the myriad of excuses they use for not furthering their spiritual education so desperately needed for the testing time just ahead. It seems nigh impossible to get people to take cognizance of the fact that even seeking our daily bread with greater priority than making sure they are in a constant state of readiness is a grave mistake. It is so true that the cares of this life, something so common as making a living, will stand as a major cause for unpreparedness. The devil has us so busy these days, we have given a high standard of living a much greater priority than eternal life. I know that sounds ridiculous but it is true. Many, many "good" people will be lost because they placed more importance on seeking this world's goods than they did the treasures of heaven. It's so sad, so very, very sad.

DEMON POSSESSED

"When the condemnation of Jesus was pronounced by the judges, a satanic fury took possession of the people. The roar of voices was like that of wild beasts. The crowd made a rush toward Jesus, crying, He is guilty, put Him to death! Had it not been for the Roman soldiers, Jesus would not have lived to be nailed to the cross of Calvary. He would have been torn in pieces before His judges, had not Roman authority interfered, and by force

of arms restrained the violence of the mob.” DA 715

It may be hard to really sink our teeth into the truth of it but we must prepare ourselves for the eventual reality of being savagely treated by those we once called brother or sister. Even those who are members of our blood family, perhaps a father or mother, brother or sister will be the very one to seek and find fiendish delight in our mistreatment. The *Great Controversy* clearly states that even before the date has been set for the annihilation of the true and the faithful there will be some who cannot wait for that time their madness is so great. They rush forward to take the lives of those who serve God and they hate. Truly, if not for the protection of God and the heathen laws or barred jail cells in some cases, the small company would not remain alive until the Lord comes.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

“The angels of God faithfully recorded every insulting look, word, and act against their beloved Commander. One day the base men who scorned and spat upon the calm, pale face of Christ will look upon it in its glory, shining brighter than the sun.” DA 715

It will be to our glory to keep our eyes on the prize. We must, through spiritual eyesight, look beyond whatever happens to us today in the knowledge that our Heavenly Father and Jesus, who went before us to His own suffering, is watching over us. Nothing will happen to us unless God allows it for the glory of the total picture. Paul said ...”this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:13,14) Brothers and sisters, there simply is no higher calling than to be called to be a true Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

Unless we learn and experience the lessons of the garden in Step 1, we will not be successful during the coming trial which all must pass through if we are to go on to Step 3, which is going to Calvary. I believe God is

visiting His people one last time and we need to learn just what the disciples learned when they were put on the very same program 2,000 years ago. I hear many concerns which pertain to unity, why there seems to be no power in the church or successful Christian living. Certainly these things should be a concern but it will be only for those, like in days of old, who recognize their day of visitation for what it is, who will reap the rewards of a job well done. What the majority of us do not recognize holds vital, eternal importance. All who have made a profession of Adventism will go through a trial of one type or another but most will never make it to THE trial that we have been speaking of in this chapter. We need to recognize that the shaking and the sifting we are now in will be the final trial for most Adventists and the verdict will be against the majority. It is at this juncture that most will not go on even though they think they are. We must recognize the day in which we live or all other future days are actually worthless. If we do take this time very seriously and with a humble, contrite heart cooperate with God, He will make us ready for the main trial which is to come upon the remnant.

If we are one of the true and faithful we will certainly go to our trial. As Jesus, we will be put to the utmost test and suffer mistreatment by our own church and those once claiming to be our spiritual family. What are you doing with the short time of preparation you have left? We hope that you will use the time you have left very wisely. We are praying that you do, and we ask that you pray the same for us.

Chapter 3

Step 3 Going to Calvary

HE TOOK OUR PLACE

“Full of significance are the words, ‘Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.’ Gal. 3:13.” DA 741

Because we all have sinned, according to the law we are to die. There is nothing in the law that allows for the redemption of man. There is no way of escape from the penalty of the law. If Christ would have chosen to, at any stage, abandon His part of the plan of redemption, man could not have been given a second chance.

A CROSS TO BEAR

“The crowd that followed the Saviour saw His weak and staggering steps, but they manifested no compassion. ... They were puzzled to find anyone who would bear the humiliating load. ... None even of the mob that followed Him would stoop to bear the cross.” DA 742

Even today most of the “church” still refuse to carry the load or burden themselves with the cross of salvation. Many who stand in the pulpit assure those of Jerusalem they need not carry the cross, they need not overly concern themselves with the burden of sin. They are told that Jesus carried the load. Most believe that’s the end of it, and forward progress is effectively halted.

For the few who realize what really happened on the way up Calvary’s hill two thousand years ago, there comes a deep sense of appreciation, a deep sense of need. The appreciation is for the willingness of Jesus to carry the load which was ours. As we understand we have a part to play in the plan of salvation, that justification isn’t the only portion of the plan to concern ourselves with, then we begin to seek a cooperative role in “working out our own salvation with fear and trembling.” Those who obtain salvation in the end are those who are willing to

share the load of our own sin problem, doing that portion of cooperative work God has given us to do.

A PROVIDENCE OF BLESSING

“He [Simon, a stranger], stops in astonishment at the scene: and as he expresses his compassion, they seize him and place the cross of Christ upon his shoulders. ... Simon had heard of Jesus. His sons were believers in the Saviour, but he himself was not a disciple. The bearing of the cross to Calvary was a blessing to Simon, and he was ever after grateful for this providence. It led him to take upon himself the cross of Christ from choice, and ever cheerfully stand beneath its burden.”
DA 742

I wish to share an observation which, at least at times, causes me to identify with Simon. Although I have a little Adventist background, I really grew up quite the heathen — worldly. Basically I came off the street and found the Lord, not having been raised up through the church. I, like Simon, am utterly astonished at times as I observe what Seventh-day Adventists really have, right in the palms of their hands, and what they are (or are not) doing with it. It is utterly amazing from my non-Christian background and point of view, how so many people can have the keys of heaven in their very possession and act as though they don't even care where the door is, much less appreciating the keys.

It is a shame to say it, but it must be said and it must be realized. If you, my brother, if you, my sister, are ever going to find the path to heaven, you will have to understand that we are living in a time which reflects the time of Simon. You, although surrounded by those who live in Jerusalem, will be as a stranger because the Jews (spiritually speaking) are not going to soil themselves with the burden of the cross.

That is not the end, however!! In freely accepting this cross, the blessing of Simon will come and you will be ever, eternally grateful for this wonderful providence. I

am sometimes overwhelmed to think that I have an active part in Adventism and the plan of salvation when I know I deserve to be still on the street, out in the world. Miracle of miracles, a God Who changes hearts and the course of lives!!

PURE HORROR

“They were not believers in Him; ... ‘Daughters of Jerusalem,’ He said, ‘weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.’ From the scene before Him, Christ looked forward to the time of Jerusalem’s destruction. ... From the fall of Jerusalem the thoughts of Jesus passed to a wider judgment. In the destruction of the impenitent city He saw a symbol of the final destruction to come upon the world. ... God suffered His wrath against transgression to fall on His beloved Son. Jesus was to be crucified for the sins of men. What suffering, then, would the sinner bear who continued in sin? All the impenitent and unbelieving would know a sorrow and misery that language would fail to express.” DA 743

It would be better to completely leave the church, go back into the world and get what “fun” we can out of the short time we have left than to put any stock in the nonsense which comes from a majority of Adventist pulpits today. The particular nonsense, in this case, I speak of assures people that “Jesus did it all on the cross,” so far as the sin problem is concerned. Jesus knows “we are only human” and, therefore, He is not really expecting anyone to do away with all sin in his life. Jesus “loves us too much” to place us in the lake of fire for our “little” sins.

This nonsense is pure heresy!! It is believed by the majority throughout Christianity, and certainly in Adventism. To believe this lie is to do more than simply waste time in the church because we also influence others with the utter failure, in the plan of salvation, this belief will provide. I have always said that the two groups are both right. One group says “we cannot and

will not stop sinning.” The other group says “we can and must stop sinning.”

The minority, those of the second group, rightly realize the plan of salvation includes both justification and sanctification. They understand that God is in the business of complete victory, not partial, and they know a person, in complete cooperation with God, can break the power of sin. Like others in Biblical history they come to a point of maturity in their walk with the Lord when their desire is to do His will. This will does not include wilful sin!! God, in turn, continues to strengthen their faith and so the cooperating one is on the upward spiral ever reaching higher and higher still. This person realizes the basic truth that the God Who holds countless worlds in space with the breath of His word certainly can overcome sin, which is generated from a created being. Not to believe this is somewhere around the ridiculous equivalent of believing evolution over creation, but people who say they are Adventists do it all the time. Those who truly believe, with all their hearts that they can overcome sin, will.

The much larger group are of the persuasion that they don't have to overcome sin and that they won't. Unfortunately and pathetically they are right as well. You see, even the Bible says “seek and ye shall find.” Everything has a cause and an effect. Because God has given us a choice, because we are free-moral agents, it is true that we *don't have to* overcome sin. Nobody is going to make us. It is also true, but so sad, if you believe you cannot overcome sin, you are already doomed to failure. If this belief of non-overcoming is retained, God cannot work in your life and your own belief in a lie will come true. Those who believe they cannot overcome sin in their lives, won't!! This group, realizing truth too late, will experience the pure horror spoken of in the last portion of the quotation above. I can assure you we do not want to be a part of this crowd.

POPULARITY — FAR TOO OVERRATED

“Of the multitude that followed the Saviour to Calvary, many had attended Him with joyful hosannas and the waving of palm branches as He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem. But not a few who had then shouted His praise, because it was popular to do so, now swelled the cry of `Crucify Him, crucify Him.’” DA 743

This quotation is a prime reason (and warning) we should pay more attention to what God says and how He feels about any given item ahead of what value man places on it. We have been taught (in the past two generations especially) that whatever is politically correct is the best way to go. In other words we have learned, from the cradle, whatever is most popular is what we should espouse. But this will prove to be a fatal flaw in the thinking of the vast majority. While it may be true that holding to an opinion for popularity’s sake brings one into relative peace, the Lord shows us that this peace is fickle and temporary. It certainly cannot be trusted or counted on except for the understanding that it will be dependably betraying. If we are to rest in eternal safety and security, we must always place God first in our considerations, and our popularity with Him, not man, must be supreme and treasured.

FAITH TESTED

“As the thieves were bound to the cross, she looked on with agonizing suspense. Would He who had given life to the dead suffer Himself to be crucified? Would the Son of God suffer Himself to be thus cruelly slain? Must she give up her faith that Jesus was the Messiah? ... as the spikes were driven through the tender flesh, the heart-stricken disciples bore away from the cruel scene the fainting form of the mother of Jesus.” DA 744

We would do ourselves no small favor to understand as best we can that our faith will be put through severe trials. As you can see in the quotation above even Mary, the mother of Jesus, was brought to a point where her faith was put to this test. The question arose — was her faith in Jesus properly placed? The disciples were tested

as well. Do we doubt that we also will share in these experiences? Will our faith be enough? Are you, am I, making sure we are doing our part in the daily exercise of the faith we have, to ensure the health of the faith we will need when these severe tests come?

BEYOND PERSONAL PAIN

“While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, Jesus prayed for His enemies, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’ His mind passed from His own suffering to the sin of His persecutors, and the terrible retribution that would be theirs. ... No vengeance was invoked upon the priests and rulers, who were gloating over the accomplishment of their purpose. Christ pitied them in their ignorance and guilt. He breathed only a plea for their forgiveness, ‘for they know not what they do.’ ... But their ignorance did not remove their guilt; for it was their privilege to know and accept Jesus as their Saviour. Some of them would yet see their sin, and repent, and be converted.” DA 744-745

While righteous indignation certainly has its place (for Christ had demonstrated it against these very rulers), vengeance and hate had no place in His character toward these men. It is often said that we must hate the sin but love the sinner. This is certainly true enough but how few there are, especially leaders, who maintain this delicate balance. While we are to hate the sin (the evil actions of people) with a perfect hatred, our distaste for what they do must not be allowed to block our compassion and pity that reaches far beyond our hatred for sin to the very soul worth of any individual. Jesus saw beyond His own pain into the retribution that was to fall on these poor, wretched souls if they were not converted. This He wished on no man, no woman, no child. He was here to save not destroy.

This compassion also gave Him the advantage that others who do not have this gift, balancing hatred for sin and love for the sinner, provides. He could see some of the leaders who were slaying Him, today, would be saved

tomorrow. Because of His compassion for the souls of men He would always be ready to forgive the truly repentant, even if it were one of those who slew Him, personally. Many who do not have this sanctified love for the soul are not balanced, they truly do not know how to love the sinner. They have the tendency to hold grudges for long periods of time. They are in a war which they feel “they” must win. Their war is far too personal. They slam shut the door of forgiveness wishing for the destruction of their enemies, hardly being able to think of their possible conversion.

Now lest anyone should misunderstand, it is important to remember that this hatred and love must be balanced. Neither does it swing the other way to what the Spirit of Prophecy calls unsanctified sympathy, a love sick sentimentalism which does not come from heaven but rather is as destructive as hatred toward the individual. It’s a lovey-dovey feeling that slobbers warm lies over the sinner, encouraging him that everything’s alright and he can go on sinning because “Jesus understands.” Those who are unbalanced in this way are every bit as dangerous as those who hate, and maybe more so. They are “loving” and hugging people right into hell, and it’s happening throughout Adventism, yea throughout Christianity. These folks think it a major sin and treason to be in the battle at all. But both of these groups are very blind and some of them very bitter.

If we are to be healthy, if we are to understand the battle, our calling, and our obligation as a soldier in God’s Christian army then we will have to gain the understanding of what it means to be “NOT BLIND NOR BITTER.” Cathy and I thought it so important to understand this that those four words have been the motto for our ministry, *Servants of the Saviour*, since the beginning. We must understand this God-given concept if we wish to be effective as God wishes us to be and if we wish salvation for ourselves. What both unbalanced parties don’t seem to understand is not only are they not helping others but they are disqualifying themselves for

heaven.

It would be hard to over emphasize the importance of coming to a proper understanding of being “NOT BLIND NOR BITTER” for here is what many (even among those who claim to work in the Lord’s vineyard) will hear if they don’t come to the correct understanding. And I must say, to many in this group must fall extreme terror when they hear these words — “Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matt. 7:22,23.

UNDERSTANDING OUR “JOB”

“Reproach hath broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. ... No testimony in Christ’s favor was heard. Alone He suffered abuse and mockery from wicked men.” DA 746

If you will take just a moment to rest your mind on the story of Job, if you seek to know his calling and how he developed faith and wisdom to understand what that calling was, then you will see better what your future is if you choose to be faithful. Even those who came to “help” Job were of no help and added to his burden and test. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy have much to say about those (us) who live in the very last days and what they (we) can expect during the days ahead. The whole world will be full of contempt for the Jobs of God’s household. Are you ready to be completely forsaken by every friend, even your mate or family? Are you allowing God to build your faith so when this day comes (and it will surely come), you will have the same kind of faith that Job had?

HERE’S TO YOUR HEALTH

“He would receive nothing that could becloud His mind. His faith must keep fast hold on God. This was His only

strength. To becloud His senses would give Satan an advantage.” DA 746

The health issue is a personal and delicate one for many people. But generally speaking I think it safe and wise to say that those who seek the principles of health God has so graciously given to this last generation will enjoy some of the rewards as the Hebrew boys did while in their Babylonian experience.

Jesus knew during His severe trial He could not afford the risk of beclouding His mind. He knew to becloud His mind with that which was not healthful would have a direct bearing, a counter effect on His faith, which was His only strength. If we approach the health question from this vantage point, rather than what God is “taking away” from us, we will be much happier and much further down the road to gaining the wisdom and faith the days ahead will demand of us. God, our Heavenly Father, wishes so much to give us these gifts. He so much wishes to equip us with these life-saving advantages. But He cannot effectively do so if we are working contrary to His plan that will provide us with these needs.

HUMAN AND SUPERNATURAL

“Satan with his angels, in human form, was present at the cross. The archfiend and his hosts were co-operating with the priests and rulers. ... Religious rulers united with Satan and his angels. They were doing his bidding.” DA 746 & 749

Believe it or not, this quotation has a lot to do with the two preceding ones. Just for a moment let’s get back to those who don’t believe we should be in any kind of battle but just be “peacemakers.” Many times I have heard those of this persuasion say we should leave the battle with the Lord, He will take care of it, and they go on speaking as if human beings are not incorporated in the Great Controversy at all.

I would politely ask these folks what they would have

said if they had lived during the time of Martin Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Huss, or Jerome? I really don't even have to ask the question because I already know the answer. Folks, no one enjoys the battle! We all wish we could live in peace and be done with this whole mess, but I can tell you, based on the inspired Word of God and six thousand years of history, if we don't start dealing with the battle in the real world and wake up from the dream state we are in, we will die!!

Maybe you don't and won't take the battle personally, but I can assure you — that won't stop your real enemy from lobbing your head off!! The devil uses both angels (who can change into human form) and real live human beings — lots of them! And those who are turning their backs on six thousands years of evidence that God uses real human beings in the real spiritual warfare which continues to rage are not only kidding themselves in the extreme but demonstrate something close to pure stupidity!! What possibly could this wilful blind eye buy anybody in the end but horror in the knowledge that a few years (at best) of "peace" has been exchanged for the charge of treason, and carries the reward of eternal non-existence?

Let's make one thing perfectly clear here. In this final generation, like it or not, nobody gets to go to their grave in a calm, peaceful manner, somehow avoiding the battle. This is just the same concept that the "rapture" advocates preach, in somewhat a different way, but the deception results in the same thing! The bottom line is those who are not preparing for the battle as if to save their very lives, will end up losing their lives!! It is beyond reason to have the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy which is chock-full of descriptions of the last days, witnessing to the facts of two opposing armies and who are in them, to have the majority of people sitting around like we are on some sort of joy ride to the kingdom. Oh, brother or sister, reader of this book, please don't fall for this deception! Please don't allow this covering of death, this deception of peace, to be

wrapped around your soul for this is not a covering of life but the shroud of Satan. We must make sure it is the Lord Who is covering us not the enemy. Just look at this quotation:

EW 44: “Some of these agents [professed Adventist preachers — human beings. Look it up for yourself!] of Satan were affecting the bodies of some of the saints — those whom they could not deceive and draw away from the truth by a Satanic influence. Oh, that all could get a view of it as God revealed it to me, that they might know more of the wiles of Satan and be on their guard! I saw that Satan was at work in these ways to distract, deceive, and draw away God’s people, just now in this sealing time. I saw some who were not standing stiffly for present truth. Their knees were trembling, and their feet sliding, because they were not firmly planted on the truth, and the covering of Almighty God could not be drawn over them while they were thus trembling. Satan was trying his every art to hold them where they were, until the sealing was past, until the covering was drawn over God’s people, and they left without a shelter from the burning wrath of God, in the seven last plagues. God has begun this covering over His people, and it will soon be drawn over all who are to have a shelter in the day of slaughter. God will work in power for His people; and Satan will be permitted to work also.”

HE THAT LOSES HIS LIFE ...

“Christ could have come down from the cross. But it is because He would not save Himself that the sinner has hope of pardon and favor with God.” DA 749

I would be less than honest with you if I didn’t admit that there have been times when I looked at my wife, Cathy, and at least half-heartedly said “Honey, let’s just find an island somewhere and just forget this mess.” But this is not what we are really called to. This is not what true Adventism is all about. Oh, perhaps we could in some degree “come down from the cross,” but when we are in full cooperation with our Maker and Master, when we

are wilfully working in lock-step with Him, we make the choice not to come down, understanding to do so would mean the loss of lives. We are therefore, constrained through the love of Christ to bear the cross and compelled to sacrifice our own lives for the cause which is in the saving of other lives. In so doing, however, we find out what life is really all about and, in the present sense as well as the eternal, by losing our lives, we find them.

JUST A GLIMPSE

“Men may exercise power over His human body. They may pierce the holy temples with the crown of thorns. They may strip from Him His raiment, and quarrel over its division. But they cannot rob Him of His power to forgive sins. In dying He bears testimony to His own divinity and to the glory of the Father. His ear is not heavy that it cannot hear, neither His arm shortened that it cannot save. It is His royal right to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. ... With amazement the angels beheld the infinite love of Jesus, who, suffering the most intense agony of mind and body, thought only of others, and encouraged the penitent soul to believe.” DA 751-752

Brothers and sisters, if only we could get a glimpse of this kind of love I think it would be enough. I too, although shallow of mind and comprehension, am amazed as I contemplate something so foreign to this world as this love of Jesus. What a price was paid that I might be with Him! Why would He even want me to be where He is? I must have more of this love! I must seek to understand it more. I have to seek a deeper knowledge of the One Who would give Himself for such a one as I. It is so comforting to know that this same One will help me in a very real way to have enough, both academically and experientially, of this love to see me through it all, IF I truly want it. Oh, Lord I do want it!! Oh, Lord it is this glimpse that helps me to realize a little how much I need it!

THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE — THE SECOND DEATH

“Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father’s acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father’s wrath upon Him as man’s substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.” DA 753

Most people that I have heard discussing the sacrifice of Jesus are very superficial in their understanding. In factual realization this entire planet is very superficial, I’m sure, even those who have taken more time to delve into the sacrifice that was given for our opportunity to be saved. But few understand, and I cannot take the space to elaborate in this book, what price was actually paid for you, for me. Many try to say that Christ could not have died the second death, but I would say they don’t understand what the second death is.

Those who espouse the non-second death theory place far too much emphasis on hell fire — *the method of bringing the second death* — instead of placing the proper weight of the bigger emphasis on actually what the second death is. I know what the argument will be (especially because I cannot elaborate here) but I can assure you that I know what the Bible says and what the Spirit of Prophecy says. I certainly would not do away with any of the particulars and the descriptions of what the second death involves in these two sources but would uphold them. Hopefully this will suffice for those who would naturally jump to other conclusions, at least ask me further questions before doing so. But having made these brief statements of safeguard, I would like to say unequivocally that Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary certainly did die the second death — that is the price that

was paid on the cross. Had He not paid this price with His own life, neither you nor I would have any right through His blood provided in the plan of salvation to eternal life. The second death represents complete separation from God. *Desire of Ages* in very descriptive terms paints a clear picture of this separation process which is demonstrated by the agonizing cries of His only begotten Son on the cross: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” *Desire of Ages* says that Jesus could not see beyond the portals of the tomb and, during this time, hope did not present itself to Jesus.

Those who look deeper into this important realization will be further drawn to a God of both justice and mercy. We will be drawn to a Father who also paid a stiff price in His role of Calvary. We will be drawn closer to His Son Who, in His humanity, did not understand that He would ever see His Father again for He was under the complete separation — the second death experience — which every sinner who does not accept this gift will feel — when He willingly sacrificed Himself for you and me. We will understand better why we must have the *faith of Jesus* to be victorious in the time that’s very near. We will understand better the experience of the 144,000 which is to take place. This one contemplation, this one gazing up at the cross, will bring rich treasures of truth to us. We will be brought to the places of overwhelming love and unsearchable awe as we endeavor to grasp that which will be studied throughout eternity. You, my friend, are very special and your God Who is also very special, has given you an opportunity that only those who have been created on this planet can one day comprehend in a special sense. All other things of this world mean nothing in comparison. I want more than anything else to be in that class of learning where the One Who came and gave Himself will also be teaching what it meant, don’t you?

IF GOD IS WITH US ...

“In that thick darkness God’s presence was hidden. He makes darkness His pavilion, and conceals His glory

from human eyes. God and His holy angels were beside the cross. The Father was with the Son. Yet His presence was not revealed.” DA 753

It is in our deepest, darkest trial that our Lord draws the closest to us. To all human appearances we may have been abandoned but our loving Father uses the darkness to draw the closest to us. There have been those before us who understood this and we would call them our Bible “heroes.” Paul would be a good example of this, as would Job, once again. Countless millions would also have understood this as they went to their deaths and to lonely cells, all in the name of Christ. Silas in the dungeon with Paul understood that God comes in times of dense darkness to soothe the soul with His presence. But we have to get one thing right before we can experience this with any lasting value — we must understand what true Christian faith is. It is a combination of two things, allowing God to provide us with the gift of His presence and the peace that passes all understanding in times of great need.

Faith is a combination of belief and action. As a matter of fact they become inseparable for faith is really belief that causes action. This faith, the same faith Jesus possesses, becomes who you are, it becomes your nature. You act on what God says because you can, in the words of Martin Luther, “do no other.” It is THE faith which IS the third identifying mark of the true church, the remnant, the true and the faithful of God. It doesn’t have to do so much with *quantity*, how much faith you have, because God is the supplier of that when needed, but with the *quality* of faith you have, something we have a big role to play in.

The ONLY way to develop this faith is exactly the same way Jesus did. He certainly wasn’t born with it except for that same measure every man is born with it speaks of in God’s Word. The *faith of Jesus* was developed by taking God at His Word and then acting on that Word. As Jesus continued to believe and act, His faith became

stronger and stronger — the quality invincible. This is the KIND of faith we can have and must have if we hope to make it through the most terrible time of trouble since there was a nation. The good news of Adventism is that if we will cooperate with God as did His Son, we can know He wants us also to have this invincible gift, even more than we wish to give good gifts to our own children!! Oh, it's so wonderful to be called to Adventism. So wonderful to know these truths! So marvelous to understand through experiential faith, the *faith of Jesus*, that during our darkest hours, our severest trials, the Father is closest to us.

THE FAITH OF JESUS

“Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father's acceptance heretofore given Him. He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of loss of His Father's favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.” DA 756

Dear friend, is it any wonder the enemy of all souls is working with fiendish energy to do away with the inspiration found in God's Word and His (not Ellen White's) Spirit of Prophecy. The enemy does not want us to come to the knowledge of this faith that Jesus had. He was at the cross!! He knows, also experientially, that this quality of faith is invincible. He knows he cannot possibly win if this quality of faith is possessed. He will continue to do everything to keep this experiential knowledge from us. He will keep us putting off our decision. He will keep us too busy with the mundane things of everyday life until it's too late, if we allow it. He knows once you start to experience this faith that is of Jesus, once you see real victories in your life, he will not only lose you but you will become effective in the

process of snatching others from his death grip.

The hope and prayer our lovely Jesus has for each one of us is that we will take time, much time, studying and experiencing this tremendous gift of belief, trust, and reliance on God's Word. He knows if we do, we will have the courage, the strength, and the desire to take action that this faith compels those who have it. Do you want this faith that looks death right in the eye, that cannot always see the answer on the other side of darkness but in perfect trust moves ever forward? If so, you certainly can have it! God wants to give it to you. He is waiting for you to want it bad enough to take that first step, in faith, so He can add the next measure and the next and the next. If you really enter into this partnership with the Father, becoming a partaker of the divine nature, He will strengthen you day by day until one day soon you will walk with Him right on into heaven!

To follow Christ to Calvary means everything to the believer, the seeker of life. At the cross of Christ's shame so many great and wonderful, awe-inspiring lessons are waiting for the honest student. Without the death of Calvary, without the personal sacrifice which comes with Calvary, we cannot ever hope to find the life that comes with the resurrection and the victory over death that comes with it.

In Step 4 we will deal with the experience of the resurrection and life anew which our Saviour Jesus Christ provided on that glorious morning. We have examined that we must die in order to live, but it is the new life that fills us with hope and the victory that every true Christian seeks.

Chapter 4

Step 4 The Resurrection

WHICH PRINCE?

“The night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away. The darkest hour, just before daybreak, had come. ... Had it been possible, the prince of darkness with his apostate army would have kept forever sealed the tomb that held the Son of God.” DA 779

The prince of darkness has been revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Satan would have kept, if possible, the Son of God, the Prince of Life in the grave forever. This he wants to do to you and me as well. But even more important than this truth we should see this spiritual application. The prince of darkness is so named because he is so effective at keeping people in a grave of the living dead. They haven't died bodily yet but spiritually they are in the grave and many don't even know it! The Prince of Life came to set the captives of the living dead free. The good news of Adventism is that we can be free indeed!

Also while we are here I wish to point out something that may be helpful down the road, a little side note. There are many winds of doctrine blowing today and one is, that the morning and evening make a day, not an evening and a morning. There are some who are now trying to convince others that the Bible shows in the resurrection, connected with the time Jesus rose, the proof of this theory. I don't have the space to expound too much, but take a look at the first sentence above. It clearly says: “The night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away.” Once again the Spirit of Prophecy is right in step with the Bible truth that evening first, then morning, make the complete cycle of a day.

POWER BEYOND WEAPONS

“Now, priests and rulers, where is the power of your guard? Brave soldiers that have never been afraid of human power are now as captives taken without sword or spear.” DA 779

Step 4 - The Resurrection

Today we are living in the duplicity of two thousand years ago. Today we can expect the “leaders” to continue to guard their pet agendas, which is the work of keeping the truth buried. **BUT THEY CANNOT AND WILL NOT WIN!!** You need to understand this truth. I need to understand it. We have a God whose Word is stronger than any weapon, any guard, any army. If we truly wish to live with Him, if we truly want to live forever, then we must take our stand on His side, irrespective of what the “leaders” say or do. In due time they too will be asked the same question in the quote above, and they will have to answer.

DOCTORS OF ...

“Caiaphas had at last found speech. Wait, wait, he said. Tell no one the things you have seen. A lying report was then given to the soldiers. ‘Say ye,’ said the priests, ‘His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept.’ ... In order to silence the testimony they feared, the priests promised to secure the safety of the guard, saying that Pilate would not desire to have such report circulated any more than they did. The Roman soldiers sold their integrity to the Jews for money. They came in before the priests burdened with a most startling message of truth; they went out with a burden of money, and on their tongues a lying report which had been framed for them by the priests.” DA 781-782

Doctors of Divinity? I don’t think so! Doctors of Deception is more like it. Did you notice that the soldiers were at first burdened with the truth which would have brought reformation to the church? Did you notice what the “leaders” did with that truth? Can we be so naive, with all the evidence today which has and will continue to come forward, and still believe that nothing of the past is being repeated in the present? Will we turn a stone heart away from the warning that Jesus brings to us as He points out the old agenda of “leaders” bribing people to keep the truth away from the common man, and how nothing has changed today?

NO TURNING BACK

Where do you think the priests got the money to bribe the soldiers? The horrible truth is that the common man who continued to support these “leaders” was supporting their agenda of deception. In effect, the laity were paying the “leaders” well for keeping them on the path to destruction! Today nothing has changed. The majority thinks that as long as the conference or an independent ministry is doing some “good” work, we are to support it. But we need to understand, one of the most effective ways the devil keeps people supporting his programs is to mix some truth in with it. Often I am shocked at what people allow “leaders” to get away with because they at times also preach some truth. It is a God-given plan that we should support His ministries but if we are to work in close cooperation with Him then we want to be as careful as we can be in this support. Let’s make sure we are supporting those who are, at the very least upholding the established pillars of Adventist faith, not tearing them down.

PEACE OF MIND

“...he [Pilate] himself privately questioned the guard. They, fearing for their own safety, dared not conceal anything, and Pilate drew from them an account of all that had taken place. He did not prosecute the matter further, but from that time there was no peace for him.”
DA 782

Let us understand two things. The God of truth will make sure that truth will be revealed sooner or later, in His own good time. God’s plan includes God’s strategy and this is worthy of our total trust. Also, do you see where it says “...from that time there was no peace for him?” If we wish to have peace in this world of violence then we must seek truth at any cost to ourselves. It has been discovered in times past and the truth lives with us still — bodily safety is a lesser concern than is obtaining peace of mind and heart. It is better to have a clear conscience than to have physical safety at the sacrifice of peace. We have such a desperate need to get our minds and goals off the “here and now” and place

Step 4 - The Resurrection

them far above into the realms of eternity.

THE END IS NEAR

“When Jesus was laid in the grave, Satan triumphed. He dared to hope that the Saviour would not take up His life again. He claimed the Lord’s body, and set his guard about the tomb, seeking to hold Christ a prisoner. He was bitterly angry when his angels fled at the approach of the heavenly messenger. When he saw Christ come forth in triumph, he knew that his kingdom would have an end, and that he must finally die.” DA 782

When Jesus rose from the dead it meant everything to us all!! It means there is victory. It means there will be those who win, against all the odds. You know, because of my limited education and my background I always knew I would never amount to much. That is not to say I was down in the dumps about it for I have always had a certain zest for life. But I always knew I would be like most everyone else, living from day to day, concerned with the next meal, not really excelling at any one thing, being very common.

Christ, however, has changed all that! I may not “win” at anything in this life so far as the standard of the world is concerned, but Jesus has opened up a way so I can be a winner. Not only that, but nobody, and I mean nobody can stop me! Even though by the world’s standards I may never be a winner, if I choose to become partners with the Lord — I will be a winner. What is amazing is Jesus has already promised there’s no man, no army, no government, not even the gates of hell, that can prevail against me while I am safely abiding in His hands. It’s time to take courage and let the truth be buried deep within our hearts — the end of our enemy is very near. He will not always have the power of control, it is about to change hands forever. In a world full of base metal, I’m going for the gold! How about you?

WHO’S IN CONTROL?

“The priests, in putting Christ to death, had made

NO TURNING BACK

themselves the tools of Satan. Now they were entirely in his power. They were entangled in a snare from which they saw no escape but in continuing their warfare against Christ.” DA 785

There came a time in history when the chosen people of the Lord became the chosen people of the Lord's enemy. There are so many things to be learned from realizing the truth of this history and its relevance to our present situation. There are many who wrongfully believe that as long as there were *some* (a few) priests who were following God, the whole system was still approved by God. This, Jesus Himself, showed to be utterly false. When Jerusalem was finally rejected, when the ancient conference office was put aside and God went to the plow for workmen, there were still a few leaders who believed in Christ. **BUT THIS WAS NOT ENOUGH TO SAVE OR RETAIN APPROVAL FROM GOD.** Jesus' work of exposure and His leading away from this corruption was straight to the point and clearly defined. He knew Joseph and Nicodemus were honest men who would come to total conversion. He knew Paul would eventually become one of the greatest workers in this world's existence — but these facts were not enough to save a system corrupted by the majority of leaders who were not under the control of His Father. **THAT DAY WE ARE NOW REPEATING** in startling exactness! Jesus told His disciples (who suffered as we do from inherited and cultivated attachment) what actions they were to take. He spoke in clear lines as He told them that if they didn't break this human attachment, if they didn't support His Father's will over man's, they would have no part in Him. One of the disciples made the wrong choice!! You know what happened to him.

We must understand that there comes a time (as is spoken of in the quotation above) when “leaders” who have a protected agenda against the government of God, finally pass a point of no return and come under the complete control of Satan. My dear friend, you and I will witness this in its fullness if it's in the providence

Step 4 - The Resurrection

of our Lord to be alive through the time just ahead. Our very lives depend on our willingness and spiritual ability to learn from the lessons our Lord brings through the lessons of times past. We must follow His lead. We dare not follow anything else.

GOD IS EVERYWHERE

“The priests and rulers were in continual dread, lest in walking the streets, or within the privacy of their own homes, they should come face to face with Christ. They felt that there was no safety for them. Bolts and bars were but poor protection against the Son of God. By day and by night that awful scene in the judgment hall, when they had cried, ‘His blood be on us, and on our children,’ was before them. Matt. 27:25. Nevermore would the memory of that scene fade from their minds. Nevermore would peaceful sleep come to their pillows.”
DA 785

People will learn soon enough that they cannot hide from God for He is everywhere. We were told we would come to a time when we would be living in the reality of Ezekiel 8. I would invite you to prayerfully study it. We are indeed living in the time of its fulfillment right now. That is the reason we are experiencing the shaking, and it will only intensify, not diminish. Chapter eight of Ezekiel is a time of exposure and discovery. As you read this chapter you will find what kind of exposure and discovery it is. Do not turn from this truth but toward its reality if you wish to remain safely in the Lord’s presence.

The time of Ezekiel 9 is just around the bend, so to speak. We are told that the events of this chapter will be literally fulfilled. This will be the time, especially, when corrupt leaders will find no rest and will live in the fear of their forefathers. This will be a time when: “Nevermore would peaceful sleep come to their pillows.” In this day, which we shall shortly partake of, many shall seek privacy but will find that God is everywhere.

NO TURNING BACK

BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES

“From the fields the first heads of ripened grain were gathered, and when the people went up to Jerusalem to the Passover, the sheaf of first fruits was waved as a thank offering before the Lord. Not until this was presented could the sickle be put to the grain, and it be gathered into sheaves. The sheaf dedicated to God represented the harvest. So Christ the first fruits represented the great spiritual harvest to be gathered for the kingdom of God. His resurrection is the type and pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead. ‘For if we believe that Jesus died and arose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.’ 1 Thes. 4:14.” DA 786

The gift of Christ’s resurrection is a promise to all who give their lives to Him, that they will live on. Even though, through sin, life has been interrupted on this planet, when Christ rose from the dead, He became a living representative of this promise of living beyond the grave.

Another lesson that I must always keep in mind is that it will do no good for me to go to Calvary if I am not resurrected. What do I mean by that statement? If I am baptized, go to my death, go through (spiritually speaking) the Calvary experience, but have no resurrection, have not life — what good did it do to die? Many today are doing just that. Why would we be buried in the watery grave of baptism if first we didn’t really die, or equally, if we didn’t rise again into a new life?

Let me ask another question. Is it easier to break the enemies power over death or over sin? Which is harder? For the Lord to break the power that keeps one in the grave? After all, the person is actually dead and to bring them back to life would be a great miracle indeed, and would require One Who possesses a power we know nothing about. Or do you think it is harder to break the power that keeps one in sin? The thing that bothers me the most perhaps, outside my own salvation, is the

Step 4 - The Resurrection

knowledge that people are going to have to answer these simple but revealing questions. If we answer them correctly and enter in the school of Christ as honest students, we will graduate. But if we continue to spurn the obvious, we certainly will not find a diploma at the end of the semester.

THOUGH ONE WERE RAISED ...

“...those who came forth from the grave at Christ’s resurrection were raised to everlasting life. They ascended with Him as trophies of His victory over death and the grave. These, said Christ, are no longer the captives of Satan; I have redeemed them. ... These went into the city, and appeared unto many, declaring, Christ has risen from the dead, and we be risen with Him. Thus was immortalized the sacred truth of the resurrection.”
DA 786

What is utterly amazing and terrible is that all these people (some 500!) went into headquarters (Jerusalem) and witnessed to the power of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. We are living in a time when we will see miracles revived! We are also living in a time where the power of Satan will be most powerfully demonstrated. Even with the evidence of resurrected witnesses, the course of the Ancient Conference did not change. Remember, they said if He would give them a sign, they would believe. He told them even if one were raised from the dead, they would not believe. Here were 500! How amazing is this?! But much more amazing is to have all these truths before our very eyes and, with the same misplaced loyalty, fall into the same trap! This is incredible almost beyond belief. For those who do believe, however few, it is a precious insight and warning that can save your life.

ETERNALLY GENEROUS

“To the believer, Christ is the resurrection and the life. In our Saviour the life that was lost through sin is restored; for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality.

NO TURNING BACK

The life that He laid down in humanity, He takes up again, and gives to humanity.” DA 786-7

Nothing can really do justice to what this reality means in the heart of the true believer. The gift of the resurrection and life not only eternal but in the present sense is a wonder of wonders. To those who are taking God at His Word, the promise of life more abundantly is a dream come true. Why does God do this for me? Why does He do this for you? The answer is wonderful and amazing to search out but we will always come up short because of our lack of comprehension. But even with our present limitations for those who have had even a small taste, I know they would share with me the invitation for all to come to seek out the generous offer of the Lifegiver. We do not deserve this gift. We cannot earn this gift. We can only barely understand any part of this gift, but it would be oh so foolish to turn aside from it. Those who have felt the communion that the Lord offers know that there is nothing that can or will compare to it. It is an amazing thing that the Lord loves you and me so much that He wants us to be with Him, forever.

It is part of the mystery of Godliness and we cannot fully explain how the Lord woos the soul's heart to Himself. This mystery however can be felt by every heart which opens itself to the Holy invitations of its Maker and Redeemer. This new life does not wait for some distant time when Christ will return, but becomes a part of the believer now. That Holy life, that eternal life, that life which is raised far above the cares of this world is housed in the promise:

“I am come,’ He said, `that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ `Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.’ `Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.’” DA 787

Step 4 - The Resurrection

HE'S JUST ASLEEP

“To the believer, death is but a small matter. Christ speaks of it as if it were a little moment. ... The life is hid with Christ in God...” DA 787

The resurrection has changed the entire concept of death. The resurrection for the true believer, means that death is but a break, a moment of unconscious waiting, in a time of eternity. The resurrection of our Lord proves that He IS the Lifegiver and that His power is stronger than the one who brings death. The resurrection is the promise already fulfilled, if we die with Christ then we shall live with Christ! There exists no power in heaven or on earth that is stronger than the One the Christian serves.

TO THOSE WHO LISTEN

“The voice that cried from the cross, ‘It is finished,’ was heard among the dead. It pierced the walls of sepulchers, and summoned the sleepers to arise. ... That voice will penetrate the graves and unbar the tombs, and the dead in Christ shall arise.” DA 787

If we are to hear His voice after physical death then we must hear it in spiritual death first. To remain in spiritual death closes the ears to everlasting life.

GOD’S CHURCH WILL WIN

“The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Him, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come.” DA 787

When God has a people, a church, who take Him totally at His Word and are willing to die that they might be resurrected then His glory will be revealed. Make no mistake about it. Although it may appear that the devil has the upper hand, it will shortly come to pass when the Lord will work mightily. His true people, His church, will rise up like a mighty army going forth to conquer.

NO TURNING BACK

As Christ was in the tomb, apparently defeated, God's plan moved steadily forward. And as on the resurrection morning Christ burst forth from that tomb so God's church will burst forth from the tomb of this world's death. The One we wish to follow is the One who said: "I am the resurrection and the life" and so He is. What a marvelous opportunity He affords to us who call ourselves Seventh-day Adventists!

It is the resurrection that provides the Christian with the hope of life — both in the present and eternally. But the resurrection also proves true that we serve a God Who is stronger than our enemy. His victory is ours! If Christ is more powerful than death (which is the strongest curse that comes from Satan), then His resurrection proves that by living His life, we can have victory in every other aspect of our life! Christ Who has the power to conquer our greatest enemy, the grave, has power to conquer the prince of the grave in every other area — and this victory is ours, if we want it.

That which comes with living the victorious life is also a longing for others to find this sweet communion and peace with the Lord. There is a longing for unity with others who share in these sacred goals of Christian living and a natural yearning to seek out brethren of like faith.

Many may be in doubt if unity can or will be achieved. We need to fix our faith not so much on what may appear to be happening at the present time, but rather on the sure Word of God. Unity will certainly come simply because God, Who sees the end from the beginning, has said it would. But we certainly have a part to play which we will briefly examine in the next chapter. We would do well to understand what God wants us to do in order to meet the appointment that His true people have in the upper room.

Chapter 5

Step 5 Going to the Upper Room

THE GLORY REALIZED

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. ... The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to ‘the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ the final and full display of the love of God.” AA 9

Even though it may seem an impossibility presently, God’s plan will see a glorious conclusion. The wisdom and power of God shines the brightest as His work is manifested in times of great darkness. The entire universe will gaze in raptured awe as they see the fulfillment of God’s plan. Now the absolute wonderful news of Adventism is that this fulfillment will involve people. Ordinary, flesh and blood people that have made a total choice on the side of the Lord. Did you ever think that you would get a chance to be a part of history that would be studied throughout eternal ages? You can be if you choose to be. That’s what Adventism is all about, being a real part of the victory of God.

TREASON

“The church is God’s fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son.” AA 11

The quotation above is a very serious one. We don’t want to take any unnecessary risk with what this means — “Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him...” What does betrayal to His church mean? Does it mean showing a lack of loyalty to a group or corporation who are not following Him? Does it mean that no matter what they do against God’s directions and plans that a person is to bow to them first and God second with His

blessing? If so, then I tell you friend that we serve a God that is a Master of confusion, not One Who speaks in clear tones. Christ showed by His own example the answer to this question if we care to look. The ONLY way to NOT betray the church is to continue to serve God first and man second if that man is doing the will of God. There is no other way. Just ask Peter!

GOD'S CHURCH — *HIS DEFINITION*

“From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people. Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church.” AA 11

When Jeremiah was threatened with death by the leaders of his day for speaking truth, who or where was the “church” then? Did God tell Jeremiah that he needed to listen to the conference leaders and keep his mouth shut? Did God say, “Jeremiah, these conference men are My chosen instruments and you need to take heed to what they are telling you. You need to recognize properly constituted church authority.” Did Jeremiah run to the conference leaders and ask them if he could go to work for the Lord? Did Jeremiah preach to the “church” what it wanted to hear thus fulfilling his obligation to his calling? Let’s look what another of God’s prophets has to say.

“Jeremiah’s message to priests and people aroused the antagonism of many. With boisterous denunciation they cried out, `Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of

the Lord.' ... Priests, false prophets, and people turned in wrath upon him who would not speak to them smooth things or prophesy deceit. Thus was the message of God despised, and His servant threatened with death. ... Through the pleading of these men of influence [some in leadership positions] the prophet's life was spared, although many of the priests and false prophets, unable to endure the condemning truths he uttered, would gladly have seen him put to death on the plea of sedition, [the exact same charge that was brought against Christ]. ... From the day of his call to the close of his ministry, Jeremiah stood before Judah as 'a tower and a fortress' against which the wrath of man could not prevail. 'They shall fight against thee,' the Lord had forewarned His servant, 'but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the Lord. ... Naturally of a timid and shrinking disposition, Jeremiah longed for the peace and quiet of a life of retirement, where he need not witness the continued impenitence of his beloved nation. His heart was wrung with anguish over the ruin wrought by sin. ... Cruel were the mockings he was called upon to endure. His sensitive soul was pierced through and through by the arrows of derision hurled at him by those who despised his messages and made light of his burden for their conversion. 'I was a derision to all my people,' he declared, 'and their song all the day.' 'I am in derision daily, everyone mocketh me.' ... But the faithful prophet was daily strengthened to endure." PK 417-420

I will take my chances on the side of Jeremiah.

YOU CANNOT POSSIBLY LOSE

"Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition." AA 12

If you really want to go all the way with the Lord, then forget about the odds. Forget that the corporate body has all the pieces of the "chess game" (or so most people think). Forget what everyone else says that would get you to believe anything other than, if you are on God's team you WILL NOT LOSE!! God is not going

to lose and neither is anybody on His side, even if there is only one soul against the present 6,000,000,000 on this planet!! Jeremiah knew this and so can and should you. He also understood that he didn't like many aspects of the situation his stand brought with it, but he took it all together and trusted the One Who always wins!

ENFEEBLED & DEFECTIVE AS IT MAY APPEAR...

“During ages of spiritual darkness the church of God has been as a city set on a hill. From age to age, through successive generations, the pure doctrines of heaven have been unfolding within its borders. Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.” AA 12

If you have been around any time at all you have certainly either heard or been handed this quotation in defense of the conference. But this quotation doesn't defend any conference or corporation at all. As a matter of fact it proves that God's church has always been people who have trusted Him. Where was the conference during the ages of spiritual darkness if in fact the conference was THE church? The conference uses this statement to excuse the gross and open sin in it and to maintain their jealously guarded loyalty, but in so doing they twist what God has said and attempt to deceive (with a good measure of success I might add) those who do not study for themselves. Thus it has ever been and thus, until the Lord returns, it will ever be.

GOD'S CHURCH — SIMPLE SERVANTS

“God's church is the court of holy life, filled with varied gifts and endowed with the Holy Spirit. The members are to find their happiness in the happiness of those whom they help and bless. Wonderful is the work which the Lord designs to accomplish through His church, that His name may be glorified.” AA 12

Precious and wonderful gifts are promised to the church

of God. God has endowed and will continue to increase, at the appropriate time, the members who make up His church with the heavenly gifts that will woo others to the foot of the cross. The work that God has designed for His church to accomplish certainly will be finished and with great power and much glory. This work is still before us and all who are a part of God's church will reflect the true pattern and plan the Master Architect has laid down. No man or group of men will or can stand in the way of its final outcome, so there is no reason whatsoever not to take an active role in being one of His servants.

To serve others in the name of God means to serve them in the ways of God. It means to give of yourself in the way the Lord has designated to be a blessing to Him and others who are searching for Him. We can either do it as did Able or we can do it as did Cain. The choice is fully our own. The two *brothers* might have been under the same roof but so far as eternal matters were concerned, they certainly were not of the same family.

INTEGRITY OR LOYALTY?

“Through the integrity of Joseph the life of that whole [Egyptian] people was preserved. Through Daniel God saved the life of all the wise men of Babylon. And these deliverances are as object lessons; they illustrate the spiritual blessings offered to the world through connection with the God whom Joseph and Daniel worshiped. Everyone in whose heart Christ abides, everyone who will show forth His love to the world, is a worker together with God for the blessing of humanity. As he receives from the Saviour grace to impart to others, from his whole being flows forth the tide of spiritual life.” AA 13

An employer (who shall remain nameless in this book at least,) who wanted loyalty asked one of his employees which was more important — integrity or loyalty? The employee answered integrity. Shortly thereafter that employee was fired. The employee was right and the employer was wrong. Integrity is a part of character

which comes from God and swallows up loyalty, and is the judge of loyalty whether it is good or evil. One demonstrating loyalty can be loyal to anything, even the devil! But one who has the character trait of integrity would be, in the proper sense, prohibited or perhaps more accurately stated, protected from being loyal to that which is evil. So which is more important? The answer was plain to those like Joseph. With integrity many can be blessed because God has an open channel through which to bring His blessings. If we have loyalty let it be to the God-given character trait of integrity.

ALL IS VANITY

“...the people of Israel lost sight of their high privileges as God’s representatives. They forgot God and failed to fulfill their holy mission. The blessings they received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages they appropriated for their own glorification. ... They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example.” AA 14

A couple of things are certainly worth noting here. Anyone would be hard-pressed to prove now days that the corporate body is following the injunctions of God in any institutions operated by or attached to the organization of Seventh-day Adventists. It may hurt to hear it and it surely hurts to say it but the organization has become far removed from the high calling or instructions the Lord has set forth. The “health” institutions and virtually the entire “health” field of Seventh-day Adventists (conference, not independent) is prime evidence of the point. The standard approach to “health” in organized Seventh-day Adventist professional circles is little more, if anything, than exactly that of the drug factories (called hospitals) of the world. This fact is startling proof of, not whether or not we are in apostasy, but how deep we are in apostasy! Although I have much to say on this particular topic it will have to wait for another time. However, because of these concerns I’d like to offer an insight acquired through personal experience, if I may.

If the different fields of education in mainline Adventism have been polluted (and they have) we must take personal responsibility for our own education, or suffer the consequences of placing it in someone else's hands. I can tell you, and my goal is not to offend here — if you are going to learn what God wants and expects of you, you had better study for yourself from the inspired books (the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy) which should make up your library. The organization will not teach it to you and generally speaking doesn't even want you to learn it or teach it to others.

FAITH THAT WORKS

“The faith that works by love and purifies the soul could find no place for union with the religion of the Pharisees, made up of ceremonies and the injunctions of men.” AA 15

My heart aches and my mind is shocked as I continue to witness the corporate betrayal of the sacred trust God gave this movement. At a time when the stability which true Adventism provides is most needed; at a time when people feel empty and are seeking a higher level of education, spiritually speaking, what is the organization offering?

Just as in ancient days faith that works by love and purifies the soul could find no place for union with the religion of the Pharisees, so today things have not changed. Today “leaders” place incredible amounts of energy and money in the defense of the church manual — the injunctions of men, as did their spiritual fathers before them.

NOT BY MIGHT — OR “FORMAL EDUCATION”

“Passing by the self-righteous Jewish teachers, the Master Worker chose humble, unlearned men to proclaim the truths that were to move the world. These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were given the power of

the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God. ... Their office was the most important to which human beings had ever been called, second only to that of Christ Himself.” AA 16 & 19

What is amazing, and goes hand in hand with accepting apostate leaders, is the denial of God’s true chosen ones. Our own books in clear, simple terms describes a time when God, as He did in times past, would go to the plow to choose men who would accomplish a work which the “educated” men in positions refused to do. Brothers and sisters, that time is now!

Those who have felt called to leadership need to be extremely serious about this calling and their understanding of it. The office to which the Lord has called them in these last hours is an important and solemn one. But the body of true believers also needs to understand and spiritually appreciate this calling. Just as vital is the need to understand how extremely important is the calling of the body to a supportive role in all its facets. Both callings are sacred and both callings are vital to the accomplishment of finishing the job.

In these last days things are already tough but they will get much tougher. As God calls men into office from the plow, He also calls those who seek the understanding of what they are to do to complement that calling. It is extremely unfortunate that many times a man whom God has called to a high station has so many unnecessary struggles which would be eliminated or minimized if the body would be faithful to the call He has extended to them at the same time. It is well within the grasp of the body to be a great source of encouragement and help if they would recognize both callings when they are in fact from the Lord.

Supportive teamwork which can and does go a long way to encourage God’s worker, all too often, gets diverted. Not recognizing a leader who is not following the Lord and continuing to support him, makes the work of the

faithful leader who holds to the truth and principles of heaven, all that much more difficult and sometimes discouraging. Those who continue to follow their feelings in this matter instead of God's principles should understand that they are actually working directly against the Lord and those who are faithful to the calling of leadership.

Then, of course, not wanting to admit that God is in fact going to the common man in many cases, even though inspiration says He would, only tends to blind the one not willing to accept God's ways and sets himself against the overwhelming evidence that we are living in such a time. And of course these things continue to make the road more difficult for the one to whom God has given the role of leadership in a time which will certainly end up the most difficult period in the history of the world.

In either case, giving continued loyalty to unfaithful leaders is a grave mistake from all aspects — a lose / lose situation. In the end the greater concern is not held by the leader chosen by God, for faithful leaders have rarely had it easy and they have tendencies to see the job through. The bigger concern is the one called to the supportive role — called to be a team player. For in supporting unfaithful leaders, not only does he fail to recognize or support the true leader, but he ends up not supporting his own salvation by his denial of God's work in continuing to pay loyalties to something God cannot save.

NOT EVERYONE'S A ROSE

“In these first disciples was presented marked diversity. They were to be the world's teachers, and they represented widely varied types of character. In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these men, differing in natural characteristics and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ's object to secure. To this end He sought to bring them into unity with Himself. ... His constant prayer for

them was that they might be sanctified through the truth; ...” AA 20

Those who seek unity in God’s way by following all of His directions will find unity with each other. The miracle, bringing together such diversified individuals into heavenly harmony WILL take place, of that there can be no doubt. God has spoken it. It will happen.

This unity, heaven’s unity, will never, can never, be achieved around committee tables with Bibles and Spirit of Prophecy books closed and church policy books open. One man holding another man hostage through some supposed “properly constituted church authority” will not produce it, nor is it the unity that Jesus prayed for. This is not how it will happen.

Rather, it will happen in just the opposite fashion. Humble students of God’s Word, no matter what position they have been called to, will seek first and foremost God’s will, God’s instruction, God’s direction. These humble students will understand the times in which we are living and the nearness of the end of all current things. God will be able to bring them together because they have thrown themselves into the cause of salvation. They will come together through a deep, experiential, appreciation for what God has done and continues to do in their behalf. They will come together because they have a deep, intense, all-consuming love for the truth as it is in Jesus Christ and for the souls Christ gave Himself for. This unity will happen. This unity is from God. This unity is sanctified as are the people who will be a part of it.

NO PULLED PUNCHES

“...He [Christ] sought to encourage them [His disciples] and to prepare them for the future. He did not deceive them with false hopes. As an open book He read what was to be. He knew He was about to be separated from them, to leave them as sheep among wolves. He knew that they would suffer persecution, that they would be cast out of synagogues, and would be thrown into prison.

He knew that for witnessing to Him as the Messiah, some of them would suffer death. ... In speaking of their future, He was plain and definite, that in their coming trial they might remember His words and be strengthened to believe in Him as the Redeemer.” AA 21

The majority today, even many who claim to devote a greater time to study than the average Adventist, still turn a deaf ear to the reality of the war. You would think by listening to this majority that they have some secret up their sleeves which if they just believe hard enough that they won't have to face the battle, then they won't. What foolishness!

This kind of “you can't see me” mind-set reminds me of the history of the Jews in World War II. Many lost their lives because, even after their nation had been occupied by the enemy, even after they had received reports of what was actually happening in other occupied territories — they simply refused to believe the evidence! Many could have fled to places of safety but because this would have caused much inconvenience they quickly developed this attitude of denial and they died as a result.

Just like the little child who covers his eyes and because of his own wilful blindness says “you can't see me,” he is self-deceived. Just as the child is in reality in plain view, so are the adults who are playing this deadly game. Folks, there is no place to hide! Neither you nor I will escape the ugliness of our immediate future. If we are to have any hope we must understand our only hope is to let down our hands, open our eyes, and look the truth right in the eye, then deal with it wisely.

HE MUST INCREASE BUT I ...

“After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were so filled with love for Him and for those for whom He died, that hearts were melted by the words they spoke and the prayers they offered. They spoke in the power of the Spirit; and under the influence of that power, thousands were converted. ... The fact that they were

humble men would not diminish their influence, but increase it; for the minds of their hearers would be carried from them to the Saviour, who, though unseen, was still working with them.” AA 22

What could be more immediately wonderful than to think of being a part of the upper room communion? We just must be there! To have an experience in this blessed union with like believers should be the goal of each one. If we are one of the true and faithful it indeed will be. However, if ours is a profession in name only, we might fool everyone else for a time, but we certainly won't be a part of this experience anymore than Judas was.

Also in the last quotation we can see the important role that true humility has. Those who seek and gain this gift will actually gain influence, not lose it. Pride is the express opposite of humility and the deception is that to hold on to it will gain influence. Both pride and humility have “I” right in the middle — pride wishes to be the center of attraction, but humility wants Christ to be the center of attraction. One brings others to himself, the other to Him.

MORE THAN PROMISED

“He [Christ] rejoiced in the consciousness that He could and would do more for His followers than He had promised; that from Him would flow forth love and compassion, cleansing the soul temple, and making men like Him in character; that His truth, armed with the power of the Spirit, would go forth conquering and to conquer. ... Christ did not fail, neither was He discouraged; and the disciples were to show a faith of the same enduring nature. They were to work as He had worked, depending on Him for strength. Though their way would be obstructed by apparent impossibilities, yet by His grace they were to go forward, despairing of nothing and hoping for everything.” AA 23

How could we wish for anything more? Christ, the One Who created us is also the One Who died for us. Christ the One Who died for us was also the One Who lived

here, was tempted like we are and knows experientially what we need for the job at hand. On top of all this, He wants us to have even more than He told us He would provide! Now if that doesn't make us want to be on the winning team, what will?

PULVERIZED!

“If they [the disciples] had believed the Saviour's words, how much sorrow they might have been spared! Crushed by despondency, grief, and despair, the disciples met together in the upper chamber, and closed and fastened the doors, fearing that the fate of their beloved Teacher might be theirs.” AA 26

Even in the very face of opportunity afforded us in quotations such as these, sadly most of us will go through this grief shared with the disciples in times gone by. Because few are using this preparation time wisely it will make the time ahead all that more difficult.

PROPER AUTHORITY?

“The disciples were to carry their work forward in Christ's name. ... Christ's name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription.” “When Christ said to the disciples, Go forth in My name to gather into the church all who believe, He plainly set before them the necessity of maintaining simplicity. The less ostentation and show, the greater would be their influence for good.” AA 28

Those called to Seventh-day Adventism are called for the sole (could also be soul) purpose of living and teaching what God has set forth as truth. We are told to live or teach anything contrary is treason and the authority given for this so-called “rebellion” is His own name. We are also commissioned to keep our message straight and simple. In this spirit I have a straight and simple question to ask: Just because someone comes along and places a robe over his own clothing, does it make him a

priest?

If a man, any man, a group of men, or an organization of men, no matter how they are dressed (even in robes), no matter what their profession, no matter what their position, commands, or attempts to woo or intimidate you into doing or believing anything contrary to the truth of Christ, it is by God's authority and His command that you are to "rebel" no matter what "properly constituted church authority" says otherwise!

NO EASY ROW TO HOE

"Christ did not tell His disciples that their work would be easy. He showed them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against them. ... But they were not left to fight alone. He assured them that if they would go forth in faith, they should move under the shield of Omnipotence. He bade them be brave and strong; for One mightier than angels would be in their ranks — the General of the armies of heaven. He made full provision for the prosecution of their work and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail." AA 29

Many years ago an elderly lady asked me this question: "Why on earth would you want to work for the good of Adventists?" She was asking why would I try to warn or teach an Adventist what I thought the Lord was showing me? I told her that not being in charge of which burden God had placed on my heart, my part was either to accept His will for my life or deny it. I also shared with her that I loved Adventists and had no intention of turning this burden aside. Her response really said it all: "Well, you've chosen the hardest row to hoe on earth!"

Some fourteen years since she spoke these words, based on my personal experience, I would have to agree with her. I can also attest, however, that because I know the promises of God's Words are sure, the burden God placed deep within my heart long ago burns hotter today than ever. Those who choose to take God at His Word

will surely suffer many things, but one thing is certain — when Jesus gives His Word, you can count on it. He won't let you down. He will never fail you.

PLUGGIN' INTO THE POWER

“The Saviour knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hard hearts or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness. He knew that the disciples must receive the heavenly endowment; the gospel would be effective only as it was proclaimed by hearts made warm and lips made eloquent by a living knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. The work committed to the disciples would require great efficiency; for the tide of evil ran deep and strong against them. A vigilant, determined leader was in command of the forces of darkness, and the followers of Christ could battle for the right only through the help that God, by His Spirit, could give them.” AA 31

Most of us who are just “common folk,” know it. We know that in many ways in the rule book of this world we are nothing more than underdogs. Most of us are simply not interested in clawing our way over everyone else to get to the “top.” Many of us have come from backgrounds which are anything but eloquent. One thing some of us do know, however, is manifested in the last quote and others such as — the Holy Spirit can teach us more in an instant than all the literary institutions on earth in a lifetime. I like that! We, recognized or not, are all underdogs. Those of us who do recognize it and through our faith in the Word of our Lord, gaze in child-like expectation at these promises, knowing in faith that God will share His wisdom and power with us in His own good time. We also recognize that is a living knowledge that changes lives which all the theories and arguments alone cannot do. It is this living knowledge — a faith that works — that we must seek. This is what brings the upper room experience. This is what answers the prayer of Christ for unity. We also recognize that it is this wisdom and power which is sought and eventually received by those who experience Pentecost.

Chapter 6

Step 6 Experiencing Pentecost

COMING TO GRIPS

“As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. ... Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds, and these they repeated to one another. ... As they meditated upon His pure, holy life they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ’s character.” AA 36

Although the vast majority of us have much to be ashamed of, we serve a God Who is more interested in where we end up than where we start out. We cannot go back except to learn valuable lessons but we are invited certainly to press forward.

GETTING OUT OF THE WAY

“... how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him by a word or an act of unbelief! But they were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven. And they determined that, so far as possible, they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world. The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.” AA 36-37

There are embarrassing and self-revealing moments when my own inadequacies for the job loom over me. I think the disciples also came to this conclusion about themselves and this helped to change the reason why and the way they prayed. They also put away their non-

salvational issues — their own petty opinions of non essentials, for the much larger common cause of Jesus Christ. This spirit of turning over the supremacy to God alone brought them truly together as brethren.

BECOMING A TEAM

“These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.” AA 37

Those who have a deep sense of their own need and a love for souls will naturally become a team player. These burdens become so great that long pleas for support will not be necessary. With a faith which is strong and a love which has its reflection in the sacrifice of Calvary’s tree, they gladly are spent for the cause of their Saviour. They have become servants of the Saviour.

IT’S BEEN A LONG TIME IN COMING

“It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and prophecy were heard. ... The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven, cut its way through unbelief. Thousands were converted in a day.” AA 38

We have lived in disappointment for a long time as people who claim to have the truth. As ones who would readily and rightly say we belong to a movement specially chosen for this time, we are almost void of God’s power. We don’t like to speak about it much but

we know (at least some do) something is dreadfully wrong. How can we claim so much and have so little? How can we possess the truth of the Spirit and yet have so little of the Spirit's power? We are disappointed and tired.

God is about to change all the above disappointments for anyone who wants it bad enough. God has waited long enough too and it's time to get on with the program, bringing it to a head, and bringing it to a close.

It is in this generation, I believe, that we will witness the resurgence and explosive power of God's Pentecostal Spirit. I have no doubt that this generation will pass through a period that has only faintly been felt in the generation of the disciples. The choice I have to make is whether I will experience this demonstration from the outside or the inside! I must decide and you have that same privilege.

SPEAKING OUR PIECE

“The Holy Spirit, assuming the form of tongues of fire, rested upon those assembled. This was an emblem of the gift then bestowed on the disciples, which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted. The appearance of fire signified the fervent zeal with which the apostles would labor and the power that would attend their work.”
AA 39

We are soon to live in the short space of unprecedented miracles. God will make one final attempt and during this time of conclusion to the contest it will be no holds barred. The archenemy will work mightily and God will work mightily. If we must go through it, let us take an active part — on God's side — and see what He can do.

USING THE SIMPLE TO ...

“The priests and rulers were greatly enraged at this wonderful manifestation, but they dared not give way to

their malice, for fear of exposing themselves to the violence of the people. They had put the Nazarene to death; but here were His servants, unlettered men of Galilee, telling in all the languages then spoken, the story of His life and ministry.” AA 40

The God of Seventh-day Adventism is not just going to allow souls to be lost to the side of His enemy without a fight. His love is much too strong to simply fold His hands and concede in this final contest for souls. God will use the simple to greatly magnify His glorious ability to make one wise, refined, and heroic beyond that which is human!

This power as demonstrated in the days of Pentecost will convince thousands of honest souls who were either ignorantly deceived or had not the opportunity to hear the truth of its validity. It will be a very marvelous thing to be in the Lord’s army that day!

FLOCKING TO JESUS

“Behold the people coming from all directions to hear the disciples witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. They press in, crowding the temple. Priests and rulers are there, the dark scowl of malignity still on their faces, their hearts still filled with abiding hatred against Christ, their hands uncleansed from the blood shed when they crucified the world’s Redeemer. They had thought to find the apostles cowed with fear under the strong hand of oppression and murder, but they find them lifted above all fear and filled with the Spirit, proclaiming with power the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth.” AA 42

A time is coming — is very nigh — when people will come flocking to hear the precious truths we have held for over a century and a half. The true and faithful during this time will feel refreshed in Spirit — their souls watered from God’s, ever flowing fountain. The “church” will hate the attention paid to the simple instruments God has chosen to share His life-giving

message. But the “fear of the Jews” formerly held will have been forsaken; in its place rests the perfect love which casteth out all fear. Nothing can now stand in the way of these warriors and champions of God’s truth.

HITTING THE NAIL RIGHT ON...

“Some of those who listened to the apostles had taken an active part in the condemnation and death of Christ. Their voices mingled with the rabble in calling for His crucifixion. ... Now they heard the disciples declaring that it was the Son of God who had been crucified. Priests and rulers trembled. Conviction and anguish seized the people. `They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Among those who listened to the disciples were devout Jews, who were sincere in their belief. The power that accompanied the words of the speaker convinced them that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. ... Peter urged home upon the convicted people the fact that they had rejected Christ because they had been deceived by priests and rulers; and that if they continued to look to these men for counsel, and waited for them to acknowledge Christ before they dared to do so, they would never accept Him. These powerful men, though making a profession of godliness, were ambitious for earthly riches and glory. They were not willing to come to Christ to receive light.” AA 42-44

Peter came to realize first of all, why he originally had so much trouble understanding and believing Jesus, and now why the people were also. In order to bring the people any real hope of salvation he must do exactly what Jesus had done, that which caused Christ to be murdered. He must break the chains that bound the people to the corrupted priests (top of DA 612). This must be done by exposing the true characters of these leaders. This principle holds true for all leaders whether they be in a conference or an independent ministry.

As hard as it may be to swallow, we are now exactly where the Jews were when Jesus walked this earth. Just as Jesus used men of His own choosing to carry on the work (mostly those we would call independent leaders but also some from those we would call conference leaders, who were honest Christians) which He started, so today God uses men who are willing to carry out this misunderstood work and difficult task of exposure. But if Jews in Jerusalem are to have an opportunity to be saved (Adventists attached in wrong ways to conferences...) then the same chains which bound them then and which bind them now must be broken! This work of Jesus will go forward and all attempts to destroy it, as in ancient times, will fail. The exposures of corrupt priests will continue because God wills it. It is part of His remedial and redemptive plan.

THE FOG LIFTS

“The veil that had prevented them from seeing to the end of that which had been abolished, was now removed, and they comprehended with perfect clearness the object of Christ’s mission and the nature of His kingdom. They could speak with power of the Saviour; and as they unfolded to their hearers the plan of salvation, many were convicted and convinced. The traditions and superstitions inculcated by the priests were swept away from their minds, and the teachings of the Saviour were accepted.” AA 44

Before the people even knew it Christ had brought to an end some things which had been established for many years. But their blind loyalty to a corrupt priesthood had darkened their perception to the light Christ’s truths would have otherwise revealed. Now with the added help of the Holy Spirit Peter’s straight message of present truth shattered this darkness and the light shown brightly.

OVERWHELMED WITH JOY

“In Jerusalem, the stronghold of Judaism, thousands openly declared their faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the

Messiah.” AA 44

Hatred toward our fellow man is such a deadly curse. But love is of God and God desires salvation — not destruction. Those who let go of their hate and allow God to fill their hearts with love are soon to be astonished at what He can do. If we have this Godly love we will be overwhelmed with joy as we see that many who have been blinded through prejudice and traditions of men, come to the light of truth. I am so afraid for those who wish for the destruction of former brethren because they hate and have not the love that Jesus has. What these poor souls do not seem to understand is that their own hatred has blinded them to the truth as well and if this hatred is retained, it will bring the same destruction upon themselves that they wish on others. This is, in part, what Jesus was dealing with when He told many of the leaders of His day that the harlots and thieves would go into the kingdom before they did.

THE FINAL TOUCH

“The disciples were astonished and overjoyed at the greatness of the harvest of souls. They did not regard this wonderful ingathering as the result of their own efforts; they realized that they were entering into other men’s labors. ... The arguments of the apostles alone, though clear and convincing, would not have removed the prejudice that had withstood so much evidence. But the Holy Spirit sent the arguments home to hearts with divine power. The words of the apostles were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting men of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory.” AA 44-45

This quotation should bring happiness to all who read it. There are so many who have been disappointed (myself included) at the lack of unity, the lack of working together. But in the above statement is the promise that God will bring His true workers together in Spirit. Before this can or could take place two things had to

happen. A winnowing had to take place as seen in the incident of Judas. God gave all a chance to examine their own hearts and motives. He gave them a more than fair chance to make a choice. Brothers and sisters, we are there again. Some will choose the way of Judas and some the way of Jesus.

After this process of heart purification for those who make the right choice, a settling into the truth by these men whom Christ had chosen to carry on the work, the Holy Spirit was given in greater measure and the final touch that qualified them, equipped them for the task ahead, was given. I believe that all evidence points to the fact that we are currently in this process and we will, not may, witness the same results, whether they be of good or of evil. Of the modern-day disciples many will see: "Under the Spirit's teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of 'one accord,' 'of one heart and of one soul.' ... Christ filled their thoughts; the advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind and character they had become like their Master.... They were filled with an intense longing to carry forward the work He [Christ] had begun. They realized the greatness of their debt to heaven and the responsibility of their work. Strengthened by the endowment of the Holy Spirit, they went forth filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. The Spirit animated them and spoke through them. The peace of Christ shone from their faces. They had consecrated their lives to Him for service, and their very features bore evidence to the surrender they had made." AA 45-46

STILL AHEAD

"What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen

Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world. ... The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. ... One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom." AA 48

When Pentecost is with us, once more we shall see marvelous demonstrations of God's miraculous and redemptive power. Do you believe this? Do you have faith that believes God can convert some of even your most bitter enemies? We must not give up on these people as some have and would have us do. We must work harder for their salvation. We must make "Jerusalem" feel the true message of Adventism whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. We must not leave the missionary ground that lies within the walls of the beloved city. We must take books such as this one and *Prophetic Parallels* and lovingly place them in the hands of even those who may despise us for it. We must run the risk that love has always run if our love has its well-spring in heaven. These messages are those that Jesus brought to the Jews. They are those that the disciples brought as well. Do you love this much? Do I?

A BATTLE AND A MARCH

"Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high, were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's

working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.” AA 49-50

We can clearly see that the road to heaven will be one full of struggle. Those who seek peace, meaning an attempt to skirt or deny the validity of the battle, on this earth will never find it. We must settle into the fact that we are in a war. A great controversy from which the only escape lies beyond its end. Until then we are to become soldiers in the Lord’s army and under His command fight the enemy. There is no such thing as getting to heaven without being involved in this last struggle in the last days. This belief is a myth. No strife — no life! It’s as simple as that.

WILLING?

“The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. ... The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. ... Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? ... The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan

and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with the rich measure of His Spirit.” AA 49-51

God’s promises of the Holy Spirit are sure. The gift of His Spirit will surely fall on all, not one missing, who are willing to receive it. We cannot afford to allow other concerns to have a continued priority in our lives. To do so would be fatal. We must hunger and thirst for this blessing.

It would be well for us to come together often to especially ask our Lord to give us of His Spirit. It would be very good if many would raise their petitions each day to ask the Lord to bless abundantly those leaders whom He has raised in these last days to receive a special endowment of His Spirit. It is this cooperation and team effort that the Lord longs to bless abundantly. He wants to pour His Spirit upon us more than we wish this ourselves.

READING THE WRONG BAROMETER

“It is not a conclusive evidence that a man is a Christian because he manifests spiritual ecstasy under extraordinary circumstances. Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love. ... It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements. ... Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. ... If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a

sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.” AA 51-53

I have to tell you this concern is right at the top of my prayer list and the point of this quotation is extremely current and important. So many people are emotionally, not spiritually connected. So many are blinded to obvious truths by their unsanctified emotions. Their loyalties are being driven by feelings which are not under subjection to the higher powers. It doesn't matter how we feel, our feelings are not going to change the truth or the fact that we will be judged by that truth.

My wife, Cathy, and I are continually amazed as we see those who profess a higher truth, benumbed by their own emotions just as much as others they condemn for the same exact thing in a different camp. To follow or support any theory or any man — no matter how talented he is — with our feelings first and God's truth second, places us under the control of Satan not God. We must come to grips with this vital truth. We need this understanding desperately! We must see our need and realize that unless we become properly balanced, placing our feelings under total subjection to God's high principles of Christian godliness, we can NEVER win the struggle for life eternal nor even the victories over self here on earth.

DO NOT DESPAIR

“...today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. Today the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing the way for the second advent of Christ. The standard of God's law is being exalted. ... And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God.” AA

We serve a God Who holds countless worlds in space and has His eye on all things. As a matter of fact just a few weeks ago scientists, with the use of the Hubble telescope, discovered that what they thought to be the edge of the universe and expected to find only darkness, actually contains billions and billions more galaxies!! We serve a God Whose ways are past finding out. He will achieve those things He said He would. His plan will be accomplished as He has promised. The work moves steadily forward and it is only the weak minds of faithless mortals who believe any thing else. It is our enemy that causes us to doubt in order to stunt, if possible, any forward progress.

As we cast our doubts aside and take hold of the faith of Jesus, we will become the ones who involve ourselves with the success, not failure, of God's promises. This will bring a finishing of the work, something we say we long for.

THE FLIP SIDE OF THE COIN

“On the other hand, there are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow the light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service. ... But unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.” AA 54-55

The power of the master deceiver is openly demonstrated in the success this statement brings

forward. Most, even those who have truth in the palms of their hands, will wait for God to do a work that they themselves have neglected. This time will never come!! We have a part to play in the plan of our own salvation and the Lord will certainly do His part as we cooperate. It will be: “Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. ... Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth’s harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power.” AA 55

The Pentecostal experience which is soon to come will be glorious to behold. It will be greater still to receive the final touch of God’s loving hand and to have an active part in the Pentecostal miracle. What a marvelous time it will be to be then a soldier in God’s army — a true part of God’s remnant people, the apple of His eye, His church.

The message of Adventism will go out with many times the glory it was ushered in two thousand years ago from which ancient vine this modern-day last movement finds its roots. Do you really want to be a part of it? You certainly can be if your choices today and tomorrow are made under the Holy counsel of your Heavenly Father. As these sanctified decisions are made we will then be fitted to go through the final step, Step 7 — the tribulation and close of probation.

Chapter 7

Step 7 Going Through Tribulation Accepting the Inevitable

NOT BLIND NOR BITTER

“The apostles spoke plainly of the great sin of the Jews in rejecting and putting to death the Prince of Life; but they were careful not to drive their hearers to despair.”
AA 59

The work to be done first among the Jews (Seventh-day Adventists) is one that must take place but it must have the balance of straight testimony with an invitation to repent and cease from sin. Although the message is a very plain one it will also include the hope of redemption. The drive or motive behind even the words of reproof will be one of redemption not destruction.

DESPERATE MEN DO ...

“Converts to the new faith were rapidly increasing, and both Pharisees and Sadducees agreed that if these new teachers were suffered to go unchecked, their own influence would be in greater danger than when Jesus was upon the earth. ... Abundant evidence that the apostles were speaking and acting under divine inspiration had been given the Jewish rulers, but they firmly resisted the message of truth.” AA 60-61

Many who are yet in Jerusalem (attached to the conference or a man wrongfully) will come to the light but the majority will not. This will also be true of the leadership itself. In this process an ever widening distinction will be seen between the opposing parties. The apostate leadership will continue to do what they can to stop the influence of those whom God has given

charge of the straight testimony. Both parties have already started their respective activities and these will increase with intensity in both camps. The hatred for both — the straight message and the messenger — will grow greater with time even in the face of much evidence brought forward validating the testimony given.

UNYIELDING

“Having committed themselves to a course of opposition to Christ, every act of resistance became to the priests an additional incentive to pursue the same course. ... It was not that they could not yield; they could, but would not. ... They persistently rejected light and stifled the convictions of the Spirit. ... The malignity of their rebellion was intensified by each successive act of resistance against God and the message He had given His servants to declare. ... If the Jewish leaders had submitted to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, they would have been pardoned; but they were determined not to yield.” AA 61-62

Those who wish to educate themselves in the process of the two opposing armies need to understand that the majority of Seventh-day Adventist leaders have no intention of turning back from their agendas of apostasy. I know this is a hard saying but if the evidence is not approached honestly, if we reject the spiritual discernment (the eyesalve) that Jesus offers, we are just as guilty as the apostate leadership.

PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT...

“Those present [at Peter’s trial] who remembered the part that Peter had acted at the trial of his Master, flattered themselves that he could now be intimidated by the threat of imprisonment and death. But the Peter who denied Christ in the hour of His greatest need was impulsive and self-confident, differing widely from the Peter who was brought before the Sanhedrin for

examination. Since his fall he had been converted. He was no longer proud and boastful, but modest and self-distrustful. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and by the help of this power he was resolved to remove the stain of his apostasy by honoring the name he had once disowned.” AA 62-63

When Peter ran back to the garden of Gethsemane, he found himself in the exact spot where Christ had previously made His final decision to follow His Father no matter what the cost. Peter did two things that brought Him to conversion. He looked at himself for what he really was and he finally understood his great need. He had nothing to lose and everything to gain. With a broken and contrite heart he took hold of both the death and the life of his Master. He first died all the way and several days later he began to live all the way for his Lord. Now no man could intimidate Peter any longer. Both those who use the craft of intimidation and those who are intimidated have not that love which does not coerce, neither does it fear men who do. It is only the love of Christ that never forces the will. It is the love of Christ that is perfect, casting out all fear.

COUNTING THE COST

“They [the Sanhedrin] felt that the work of the disciples must be stopped or Jesus would gain many followers. ... But notwithstanding their desire to destroy the disciples, the priests dared not do more than threaten them with the severest punishment if they continued to speak or to work in the name of Jesus. ... Gladly would the priests have punished these men for their unswerving fidelity to their sacred calling....” AA 66

When the Lord called me to the work several years ago, I had no doubt where and who the greatest opposition would come from. I am convinced that the greatest reason I wasn't too surprised, generally speaking, is

because I gained my total spiritual education from my own library — the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. I chose to believe what the Word of God told me in these books and the years have certainly proven it out. But I am determined to accept the total package — the joy and the sorrow, realizing to some degree that both will come as part of the job.

Folks, God has not asked me to realize anything that He will not ask you to as well. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are both full of these warnings and declarations. It is when we stop complaining so much and learn to cast our cares and concerns at His feet, placing our trust wholly on God that we will come to these trials with spiritual fortitude as did people (such as Paul) who have traveled this ground before us.

THE HOLY BANNER OF TRUTH

“The principle for which the disciples stood so fearlessly when, in answer to the command not to speak any more in the name of Jesus, they declared, ‘whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye,’ is the same that the adherents of the gospel struggled to maintain in the days of the Reformation. ... This principle we in our day are firmly to maintain. The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God’s witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word. We are to receive this word as supreme authority.” AA 68-69

The Seventh-day Adventist movement was raised specifically for the purpose to revive the Spirit of the Reformation. The principle of the Reformation is GOD FIRST, MAN SECOND. This command of God carries the

same weight of authority as does the Sabbath Commandment. Not only can no man make your conscience suffer for keeping the Sabbath but no man can make you serve him above God.

It is as we take this truth to heart we no longer are under the control of men who wish the homage that is God's alone to claim. We will not only tell these apostate men that they have no authority over us but we do it with a secure knowledge it is with God's authority, command and approval.

PREJUDICE OF PRIESTS

“As the disciples proclaimed the truths of the gospel in Jerusalem, God bore witness to their word, and a multitude believed. Many of these early believers were immediately cut off from family and friends by the zealous bigotry of the Jews...” AA 70

The sooner we know who is who and what they will do to those who stand in their way — the better off we will be. Jesus knew the leaders of His day would use their influence to create prejudice and separation even among families. This is why He asked the question, who is My family? We need to develop the belief in and nurture the truth that our family consists of those who follow our Heavenly Father. This understanding will not circumvent the grief of family betrayal that will come to the true and faithful but the test will come with fewer surprises. To be forewarned is to be forearmed as the saying goes.

WHERE YOUR HEART IS ...

“This liberality [support for the true work] on the part of the believers was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. The converts to the gospel were ‘of one heart and of one soul.’ One common interest controlled them — the success of the mission entrusted to them; and covetousness had no place in their lives. Their love for

their brethren and the cause they had espoused, was greater than their love of money and possessions. Their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of higher value than earthly wealth. ... Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers.” AA 70-71

With conversion comes conviction that our talents and means are to be placed on the altar of sacrifice. A love for souls will compel us to support the work of soul winning. As our desire to see more souls in God’s kingdom increases, it will not be a burden to support this work but a great joy. That which was once a burden becomes a bigger burden of the heavenly sort.

TARRY YE HERE IN...

“In Jerusalem, where the deepest prejudice existed, and where the most confused ideas prevailed in regard to Him who had been crucified as a malefactor, the disciples continued to speak with boldness the words of life, setting before the Jews the work and mission of Christ, His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.” AA 77

As some are attempting to compel others to give up on and leave behind those who remain inside “Jerusalem,” the Lord still has a work to be done in and for them. The Lord loves those in Jerusalem and so will those who love Him and understand His work.

LOST ALL REASON

“The leaders in the Jewish nation had signally failed of fulfilling God’s purpose for His chosen people. Those whom the Lord had made the depositaries of truth had

proved unfaithful to their trust, and God chose others to do His work. In their blindness these leaders now gave full sway to what they called righteous indignation against the ones who were setting aside their cherished doctrines. They would not admit even the possibility that they themselves did not rightly understand the word, or that they had misinterpreted, misapplied the Scriptures. They acted like men who had lost their reason. ... Being determined to suppress the teaching of these ideas, they imprisoned those who were presenting them.” AA 78-79

Today this same spirit of leavening is affecting the whole body within the organization. The leaven continues to rise. What you read in this quotation is happening and will continue to happen before your very eyes. If you don't see it I would humbly but seriously submit that the reason for not seeing it should drive you to your knees to ask God to show you what you need to see. I do not wish to offend by saying this in any way for God speaks to me and everyone in these terms at one time or another. I do wish, however, that the reader understand that not seeing the deep spirit of apostasy taking place means one is seriously blinded to saving truth. The leaders will continue in their downhill course finally losing all reason, hell-bent on destroying those who remain faithful to the holy calling of true Adventism.

GOD'S WAYS ARE NOT...

“The God of heaven, the mighty Ruler of the universe, took the matter of imprisonment of the disciples into His own hands, for men were warring against His work. By night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and said to the disciples, ‘Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.’ This command was directly contrary to the order given by the Jewish rulers; but did the apostles say, We cannot do this

until we have consulted the magistrates and received permission from them? No; God had said `Go,' and they obeyed." AA 79-80

We have been told that a day would come when God would take the reins of His work into His own hands. I've always asked the question — if He has to take the reins into His own hands, whose hands have they been in?

God doesn't need massive numbers of people to finish the work nearly as much as He needs "a few good men." God is already taking the reins back. He has already started going to the plow. He will oppose and defeat apostate leadership in these last days exactly as He did two thousand years ago and just as He has for six thousand years. And these chosen men will not waste time seeking permission to do God's work from apostate leadership. They have already received their instructions from God. This they understand. This they follow.

FALSELY ACCUSED

"The priests and rulers had decided to fix upon the disciples the charge of insurrection, to accuse them of murdering Ananias and Sapphira, and of conspiring to deprive the priests of their authority. They hoped so to excite the mob that it would take the matter in hand and deal with the disciples as it had dealt with Jesus. They were aware that many who did not accept the teachings of Christ were weary of the arbitrary rule of the Jewish authorities and anxious for some change. The priests feared that if these dissatisfied ones were to accept the truths proclaimed by the apostles, and were to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, the anger of the entire people would be raised against the religious leaders, who would then be made to answer for the murder of Christ. They decided to take strong measures

to prevent this.” AA 80-81

Did you notice that the “crime” of the disciples was the same as the apostate leaders tried to bring against Jesus? These leaders stopped at nothing two thousand years ago in order to shut Christ up to protect their own authority, including murder. Do you suppose the same thing will happen this time? Jesus said if they do this to Me how much more will they do it to you? Do you believe what Jesus said?

HEROES FOR HEAVEN

“In the history of prophets and apostles, are many noble examples of loyalty to God. Christ’s witnesses, have endured imprisonment, torture, and death itself, rather than break God’s commands. The record left by Peter and John is as heroic as any in the gospel dispensation. As they stood for the second time before the men who seemed bent on their destruction, no fear or hesitation could be discerned in their words or attitude. ... The Spirit of Inspiration, came upon the disciples; and the accused became the accusers, charging the murder of Christ upon those who composed the council. ... So enraged were the Jews at these words that they decided to take the law into their own hands and without further trial, or without authority from the Roman officers, to put the prisoners to death. Already guilty of the blood of Christ, they were now eager to stain their hands with the blood of His disciples.” AA 81-82

How can people who love the disciples (laymen whom God chose to become independent ministers of truth) hate men whom God has chosen today for the same purpose of doing the same job? If we are inconsistent with our reasoning, we are going to have to answer to God. We will all be judged by what we did, and how we handled the truth. God is going to ask us why we think He gave us all this testimony in the Bible and Spirit of

Prophecy and what we did with it. I guarantee you, those who call Peter a hero (and rightly so) for standing against apostate leaders of his day, but turn right around and call his present-day counterparts heretics, will not fair well with a God Who changes not.

WAR AND PEACE

“Christ said of Himself, ‘Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.’ Matthew 10:34. The Prince of Peace, He was yet the cause of division. He who came to proclaim glad tidings and to create hope and joy in the hearts of the children of men, opened a controversy that burns deep and arouses intense passion in the human heart. And He warns His followers, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation.’ ‘They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake.’ ‘Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.’ John 16:33; Luke 21:12,16.” AA 84

Those who continue to claim that Jesus never condemned anyone or that He never caused any trouble just do not know or they choose to deny the obvious. If this self-deception continues their unbalance will increase and so will their probability for destruction.

THE SAME HATRED

“This prophecy has been fulfilled in a marked manner. Every indignity, reproach, and cruelty that Satan could instigate human hearts to devise, has been visited upon the followers of Jesus. And it will be again fulfilled in a marked manner; for the carnal heart is still at enmity with the law of God, and will not be subject to its commands. ... The same hatred that prompted the cry, ‘Crucify Him! crucify Him!’ the same hatred that led to

the persecution of the disciples, still works in the children of disobedience. ... The history of truth has ever been the record of a struggle between right and wrong. The proclamation of the gospel has ever been carried forward in this world in the face of opposition, peril, loss, and suffering.” AA 84-85

Who was it that yelled “Crucify Him! crucify Him!”? Was it the world? No!! It was ancient Seventh-day Adventists — the spiritual forefathers of the present and final movement. This history has been recorded by God so that we could learn the vital lessons it provides. My dear friend, these are not just Bible stories for some sort of spiritual entertainment but a savor of life unto life. Those who have come to this well but refuse to drink will end up in the valley of dry bones as did our ancient counterparts. The prophecy spoken by Jesus to His disciples concerning them is now history. This prophecy will be again fulfilled in a marked manner, for nothing, and I mean nothing, has changed.

THE ROCK IS OUR STRENGTH

“What was the strength of those who in the past have suffered persecution for Christ? It was union with God, union with the Holy Spirit, union with Christ. Reproach and persecution have separated many from earthly friends, but never from the love of Christ. Never is the tempest-tried soul more dearly loved by His Saviour than when he is suffering reproach for the truth’s sake. ... When for the truth’s sake the believer stands at the bar of earthly tribunals, Christ stands by his side. When he is confined within prison walls, Christ manifests Himself to him and cheers his heart with His love. When he suffers death for Christ’s sake, the Saviour says to him, They may kill the body, but they cannot hurt the soul. `Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ `Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee;

yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.’ John 16:33; Isaiah 41:10.” AA 85

In the time just before us, if we are faithful, will be seen many dreadful things. As the disciples and their follower/supporter team before us were led in paths not of their own choosing, so will it be our lot to tread the same path. But we have been called to a faith that rises above any other power except that of our Saviour, Friend, Brother — Jesus Christ. We shall not fear their faces for if God is with us who can be against us?

As true Adventists these beliefs are held dear, not because we are better or greater than any other, but because the opposite is true. Our faith has brought us to the truth that we are so weak, so much in need that we die to ourselves and surrender all to Him Who is our only hope of survival.

In order for us to meet our testing time and the hour of temptation; in order for us to drink of that bitter cup our Lord partook of, we must come to the gates of Gethsemane’s garden. From this place of decision we can face our trials and beyond.

It is my hope that this overview will invite the reader to further and much deeper study. It is my prayer that you will be as spiritually challenged by this small contribution as I have been in writing it. It is my personal goal and as well my hope for those who read this book that we will come to a point in our Christian calling as Seventh-day Adventists when we, once and for all time, settle forever the question of whom are we going to serve. It is my hope and prayer that we share the goal of giving our total service to Jesus Christ no matter what the cost and that in making this decision we will by daily serving Him become so settled that there will be NO TURNING BACK.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Terry and Cathy Ross are the founders of *Servants of the Saviour*, which began in 1985. Their original research and exposure of the “celebration” style of worship and NLP has helped thousands discover and examine what has happened within the ranks of Adventism. Their documentation and videos have gone around the world in a continuing effort to warn, educate and encourage others concerning these apostasies and present-day truths.

In his first book, *Prophetic Parallels*, Terry discloses present-day truth and substantiates his claim that we are passing through a time which parallels the time of Christ and His disciples. The timeless message contained in *Prophetic Parallels* continues to be in great demand and enjoys an ever-widening circulation.

Terry and Cathy travel the world speaking on these and related topics. They are appreciated for their honest reporting and straight forward, practical preaching. They continue to have major missionary outreaches in the South Pacific islands which includes, with the generous help of *Servants of the Saviour* supporters, building churches and providing Bibles and truth-filled literature to thousands who otherwise would not receive them.

Terry and Cathy have an intense love for the truth of Adventism and for God’s people. The reader is warmly invited to contact *Servants of the Saviour* to receive monthly publications and obtain further information provided by their ministry. Your prayers are humbly sought and gratefully accepted in behalf of the continued work the Lord has entrusted to them.

Servants of the Saviour
P. O. Box 7277

Citrus Heights CA 95621-7277
USA

Harvestime Books Resource Library
<http://www.remnant-prophecy.com>
<http://www.Harvestimebooks.com>
<http://www.bible-sabbath.com>