

# Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant. Psalm 25:14

Vol. 15, No. 1

Straight and Narrow

January 2006

## We Must Be Ready!

By Allen Stump

We at Smyrna Gospel Ministries do not carelessly or thoughtlessly wish to run ahead where angels fear to tread. We are not unmindful of the importance of the current topics we have been studying in the last few issues of *Old Paths* and of their potential long-range consequences. It is not our desire either to hold the truth back from God's people or to keep the people away from God's truth as is found in His Holy Word. Paul tells us in Romans 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [back] the truth in unrighteousness." (Margin)

Whenever I present God's Word to others and every time I stand before God's people as a steward of His mysteries, I feel upon my shoulders the heavy weight of responsibility, not only for my own soul's salvation, but also for the salvation of all those I come in contact with either in person or through the printed page. In 2 Thessalonians 2:10 we read: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." I desire to always cherish a deep love of the truth and I desire that for each one of you also.

We know from the three angels' messages given to us in Revelation 14 that we are living in the judgment hour when the fall of Babylon is complete and the great issue of the mark of the beast is to be pressed upon every individual. There is a solemnity and a seriousness about the time we are living in that we need to enter into and to approach.

In Ezekiel 7:1-7 we read: "Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Also, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto the land of Israel; An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. Now is the end come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD Thus saith the Lord GOD; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come. An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again [or echo] of the mountains." This earth is experiencing many global trials, tribulations, and troubles with tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, and other such things; but we haven't begun to see the magnitude and intensity of the natural catastrophes which will soon take place as the great controversy

### Prayer Requests

Today we are living in a world of suffering, violence, and sin as never before. Surely God's people wish to see the gospel proclaimed and the work finished so Jesus can come back to end this reign of sin. Interestingly, Ellen White wrote: "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69)

To mirror the character of Christ we must receive His righteousness. The topic of righteousness by faith is being revived among those teaching the truth about God as never before and we should be seeking God for an outpouring of His Spirit so that we might properly understand and accept the spotless robe of His righteousness. May we all pray earnestly that God's work will be quickly finished in us.

*Editor*

### Also in this issue:

- Faith and Works—E. G. White . . . . . p. 5
- Theology Made Simple (Part 2)—Stump . . . p. 6
- Youth's Corner—E. G. White . . . . . p. 11
- Christ's Righteousness—Stump-Holt . . . p. 12
- Florida Revival Retreat . . . . . p. 15
- 2005 WV Camp Meeting Tapes . . . . . p. 15

between Christ and Satan wraps up on this earth. But it is not in natural catastrophes alone that we see God's judgment, but in crises, strife, and bloodshed all over this world, especially in the Middle East; strife and violence that will only multiply and worsen. The Bible says an evil is coming and not just to the world, but to those who profess to be Israel also. Verses 25 and 26 say: "Destruction cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none. Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients."

In the eighth chapter of his book, Ezekiel describes the abominations occurring among God's people and chapter 9 details the slaughter of those who are guilty of these abominations. In Ezekiel 9:1, we read: "He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand." According to *Early Writings*, p. 279, Christ is the one who is speaking. "And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughterer weapon in his hand; and one man [Gabriel (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 444)] among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jersulaem, and set a mark ["the pure mark of truth." (*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 267)] upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity." (Ezekiel 9:2-5)

Let us think about this for a minute. There is deep apostasy and wickedness in Israel. Only evil is coming because there has been only evil occurring, and now a mark is to be put upon the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done. Five angels of God have slaughtering weapons in their hands and an order of execution has been given to them. We might look at this situation and think that the men to be destroyed are the men that Ellen White refers to as "ring-leaders in apostasy" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 212) and that God in His wisdom will allow them to be stricken down, but friends, this is not all that is said. Verse 6 says: "Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house."

This is a serious, solemn issue and it involves every one of us—men, maidens, and little children. The fact is we will all perish together unless we receive that "pure mark of truth,"

unless we receive the seal of God into our lives as a vibrant, experiential knowledge of what the truth is.

God has given us special understanding that this vision of Ezekiel was a prophecy. It was not an event that was to happen to literal Israel several hundred years ago, but it is an event that is to happen at the very end of time. (See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 208.) You might say, "I keep the Sabbath and I know the truth about God," but remember the devil knows these things also and he trembles, beloved. These truths must become a part of our experience, and we cannot hold our peace to obtain the favor of anyone. We have to say what the truth is. Many times people accept as truth what the leaders, the preachers, and the teachers of God's people say is truth; however, we are each individually accountable for our own salvation. The Bible tells us we are to study to show ourselves approved unto God (2 Timothy 2:15), but the sad reality of the matter is that whatever the leaders of the people teach, that is the direction the people as a body will take. It always works this way. This is one of the reasons that the messages of Revelation 2 and 3 are addressed to the angels of the churches, or the leaders of the churches. God says to these messengers, "Wake up, because the people will wake up when you do." How many times in the Bible was there ever a grassroots movement that really brought reformation to Israel? The reformation always started with the kings and the leaders, because in general, the people follow their leaders. It is wrong to play this follow-the-leader game, but God understands that it happens and that if we keep doing this, we will be lost, so He pleads with us as individuals to study for ourselves and then follow His Spirit's guidance.

The important testimony Ellen White penned that we have been making reference to in volume 5 of the *Testimonies* concerning the seal of God was written in 1882. The pertinent question today is, "What are we doing in the great work of preparation?" Do you want your life prepared? When a mold is made in a machinery shop, it is so the same impression can be made over and over. Jesus has a mold, friends. It is His very character, His very self, and He wants to impress this mold upon each one of us. Isn't that beautiful? But friends, there is a mark, or a mold if you please, that is being cast for all other people, and that same mold will be impressed for all eternity. It is the mold of selfishness and of Satan and his ways, and the people impressed with this mold will be lost.

Revelation 14 contains an important message that God gave to the Advent people in 1844. He chose this group because as He looked down upon all the churches of the world, He realized that none of the churches were fitted to give the end-time message. Now, let us consider the work of God during the Reformation. Was a good work done? Yes, of course it was. We would probably all agree that Martin Luther was a great man of God. In fact, Ellen White says:

[Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. Zealous, ardent, and devoted, know-](#)

ing no fear but the fear of God, and acknowledging no foundation for religious faith but the Holy Scriptures, Luther was the man for his time; through him, God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world. (*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 94)

The fact of the matter is, Luther taught many things that we would call heresy today. For instance, he believed in the Trinitarian doctrine and he taught Sunday sacredness.

John Calvin was another man used of God in the Reformation. Many of the things that John Calvin taught we would today acknowledge as error, yet we know that he and Luther both did a good work, so how do we reconcile this? Friends, the reformers were taking people from a place that was very, very dark to a place with a certain amount of light that was beneficial and needful to them, but God realized that the light couldn't stop with Luther, Calvin, or with the other reformers. It had to keep shining brighter, so He raised up the Advent movement because the churches that had been founded by those reformers weren't doing their work. There is no question that God used those men, but friends, He wanted to take the people further. Just because a man can and does do a good work doesn't mean that the work stops with him.

Please consider the following question. How much poison would you be willing to consume? Enough to just make you sick? Enough to kill you? Of course you would not knowingly ever want to take any poison. This idea should help us understand the principle that inspiration teaches: "Error is never harmless." (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 292) We might wonder what this really means but the truth of the matter is; if our garments are to be spotless; if in accordance with Revelation 14:5, the 144,000 are to have no guile in their mouths; if Jesus is coming back for a church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; then friends, there is no error that we can knowingly allow that will not have a harmful effect on us. If it doesn't cause us to be lost, it will at least cause us to miss out on the kind of experience it could have been our privilege to have had. We want to have the best experience possible. We are coming to the end of all things and time is running out to develop our characters, for character isn't something God can just plant into us. Character isn't something He can hand to us and it becomes ours. That is not the way character is developed. Character is developed by making choices. We have thoughts, which lead to our feelings, and these feelings produce our actions. Our actions then produce our habits and habits are what produce our characters. We don't have much time left. If we are going to be ready for the kingdom at last, then we must realize that we are at the very end of time. We must get ready now while we still have time to prepare.

"Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous." (*Ibid.*)

We are probably all familiar with the phrase 'pillars of our faith.' In 1889 Ellen White wrote a testimony addressing the preaching of righteousness by faith. At that time some were saying that the Advent people had left some of the pillars of their faith and Ellen White attempted to correct them. Some of the points she brought up are important for us to consider today. "The passing of time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people on the earth, [also] the first and second angels' messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks." (*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, pp. 30, 31)

Every week the Adventist Church publishes a paper which used to be called *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. When Ellen White's husband, James, first began to print many years ago, he first published a little paper called *Present Truth*, which was designed to encourage the brethren who had come out of the 1844 movement and to also teach truth and to be used as an evangelistic tool. This paper went through an evolutionary process and eventually became *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, and this paper, under different names, has been in continual publication for over 150 years. Its current editor, William Johnson, has been, if you please, one of the great ring leaders of the apostasy that we referred to in volume 5 of the *Testimonies*. There have been other men in the past, men like LeRoy Froom, Roy Allen Anderson, Desmond Ford, and others who have been either teachers or very influential people in the main body of Adventism and who have taught very heretical ideas, even to the point of being anti-Christian. Now interestingly, if you were to ask any of these people, "Which one of the pillars of our faith, as mentioned in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, do you not believe in," each one would say, "I believe in every single one of them. There is not one that I don't believe in." The problem comes when you try to dissect what these pillars mean to them. "What does the sanctuary in heaven mean, for example, or what do the first, second and third angels' messages mean?"

It has been noted that in the list of pillars given by Ellen White, no mention is made of the truth about God, and some have wondered why it is an important concept to consider today. Most brethren who consider themselves "historic Adventists" differ from the mainline church on the nature of Jesus and His incarnation. They hold very strongly to the early position of the church, which is, that when Jesus came to this earth, He took upon His sinless nature our sinful

**Character isn't something God can hand to us and it becomes ours. Character is developed by making choices.**

nature, the nature of Adam after the fall. They believe this understanding is so important that they call it a pillar of our faith. They base their whole existence as a separate movement almost on that one issue alone, but that issue is not specifically delineated in the pillars of our faith as mentioned in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*. These people realize the concept is important because it is part of the core understanding of what makes up the pillars. You can say that you believe in the Sabbath, in the non-immortality of the soul, and in the sanctuary doctrine, but what do you really believe *about* these doctrines? Just saying that you hold onto the pillars of your church, friends, isn't enough. You have to have a real understanding of the depths of what those pillars really mean. Ellen White says that "Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed." (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 213) There will be people who profess to keep the Sabbath, who teach about the Sabbath, and who appear outwardly to be good Sabbath-keepers, but they are not going to be in God's kingdom!

There are many well-known, current and former, seminary teachers who would say they believe in these pillars, but these men have done great damage to the Advent movement because they have been influential teachers in our schools and the ministerial students have listened to them.

Sometimes in the church controversy, and even opposition, arises to established truth. People come up with different ideas and erroneous doctrines, but even this may not be wasted time, because a certain amount of opposition may be necessary so that we don't end up as spiritual dwarfs.


The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition and worship they know not what. (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 707)

So, Ellen White says doctrinal controversy is a benefit. God doesn't ordain it, but He allows it to be of benefit to us to make us think and search for ourselves. Otherwise we may end up following tradition and worshipping that which we know not, because we haven't really studied and examined the Bible for ourselves.

The first three chapters of the Bible tell us about the emergence of sin into the world and the last three chapters of the Bible tell us about the destruction of sin, but there is an interesting passage near the middle of the Bible in Isaiah chapter 13, starting in verse 9 that is a parallel with Ezekiel. "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall

be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible." (Isaiah 13:9-11) And then He tells us what He will do. "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." (v. 12) God is talking about perfecting a people whose image is just like His and He is going to do it.


Friends, one thing is certain. We must know what we are up against. We must know the foe that we are fighting. We must know the difference between sin and righteousness if we are going to be pure. Friends, the only way to be pure is to be free from sin. "Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth." (*Desire of Ages*, p. 490) May we each study, pray, and seek God as never before, for an evil is coming upon the land. It is almost here! Our only refuge is to be found in Christ, who is "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) Jesus said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:17) May our Father give us a willing heart, a heart "willing to be made willing" (*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 142) so we may both know, and do, His sweet will.

Friends, Jesus never said to get ready, He said, "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." (Luke 12:40) For years many have been saying we must get ready but today we say, we must be ready! 



*"Faith and Works," continued from p. 5*

When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who claim to have faith in Him and yet are disloyal to His Father's commandment. We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easy-going, accommodating, crossless religion.

But Jesus says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24). 

# Faith and Works

By Ellen White

Morning talk at Basel, Switzerland, September 17, 1885. Published in *Signs of the Times*, June 16, 1890.

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). There are many in the Christian world who claim that all that is necessary to salvation is to have faith; works are nothing, faith is the only essential. But God’s Word tells us that faith without works is dead, being alone. Many refuse to obey God’s commandments, yet they make a great deal of faith. But faith must have a foundation.

God’s promises are all made upon conditions. If we do His will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavor to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but He will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey His commandments, we may cry, “Faith, faith, only have faith,” and the response will come back from the sure Word of God, “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:20). Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In order to have the benefits of God’s grace we must do our part; we must faithfully work and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

We are workers together with God. You are not to sit in indolence, waiting for some great occasion, in order to do a great work for the Master. You are not to neglect the duty that lies directly in your pathway, but you are to improve the little opportunities that open around you. ...

## To Wrestle, Labor, and Strive

We are to do all that we can do on our part to fight the good fight of faith. We are to wrestle, to labor, to strive, to agonize to enter in at the strait gate. We are to set the Lord ever before us. With clean hands, with pure hearts, we are to seek to honor God in all our ways. Help has been provided for us in Him who is mighty to save. The spirit of truth and light will quicken and renew us by its mysterious workings; for all our spiritual improvement comes from God, not from ourselves. The true worker will have divine power to aid him, but the idler will not be sustained by the Spirit of God.

In one way we are thrown upon our own energies; we are to strive earnestly to be zealous and to repent, to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts from every defilement; we are to reach the highest standard, believing that God will help us in our efforts. We must seek if we would find, and seek in faith; we must knock, that the door may be opened unto us. The Bible teaches that everything regarding our salvation depends upon our own course of action. If we perish, the responsibility will rest wholly upon ourselves. If provision has been made, and if we accept God’s terms, we may lay

hold on eternal life. We must come to Christ in faith, we must be diligent to make our calling and election sure.

The forgiveness of sin is promised to him who repents and believes; the crown of life will be the reward of him who is faithful to the end. We may grow in grace by improving through the grace we already have. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world if we would be found blameless in the day of God. Faith and works go hand in hand; they act harmoniously in the work of overcoming. Works without faith are dead, and faith without works is dead. Works will never save us; it is the merit of Christ that will avail in our behalf. Through faith in Him, Christ will make all our imperfect efforts acceptable to God. The faith we are required to have is not a do-nothing faith; saving faith is that which works by love and purifies the soul. He who will lift up holy hands to God without wrath and doubting will walk intelligently in the way of God’s commandments.

If we are to have pardon for our sins, we must first have a realization of what sin is, that we may repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. We must have a solid foundation for our faith; it must be founded on the Word of God, and its results will be seen in obedience to God’s expressed will. Says the apostle, “Without ... [holiness] no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

Faith and works will keep us evenly balanced and make us successful in the work of perfecting Christian character. Jesus says, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter in the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Speaking of temporal food, the apostle said, “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10). The same rule applies to our spiritual nourishment; if any would have the bread of eternal life, let him make efforts to obtain it.

We are living in an important and interesting period of this earth’s history. We need more faith than we have yet had; we need a firmer hold from above. Satan is working with all power to obtain the victory over us, for he knows that he has but a short time in which to work. Paul had fear and trembling in working out his salvation; and should not we fear lest a promise being left us, we should any of us seem to come short of it, and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life? We should watch unto prayer, strive with agonizing effort to enter in at the strait gate.

## Jesus Makes Up for Our Deficiency

There is no excuse for sin or for indolence. Jesus has led the way, and He wishes us to follow in His steps. He has suffered, He has sacrificed as none of us can, that He might bring salvation within our reach. We need not be discouraged. Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through His grace, we might be transformed into His likeness.

*Continued on page 4, column 2*

# Theology Made Simple (Part 2)

By Allen Stump

Last month we noted the need to properly communicate our thoughts by stressing the need to have vocabulary that had understandable terms. We noted that “Christology” is the study of and affirmation of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. We saw that its foundational point is the nature and person of Christ. We also noticed that “soteriology” is the area of Christian theology that deals with Christ’s work of salvation. One of the most basic principles of soteriology is the understanding of sin.

The nature of Christ and one’s definition of sin are critical to proper theology, as it has been demonstrated time and time again that one’s view on these two points determines the believer’s view on the plan of salvation.

Any time there is a shifting of theology with a new paradigm introduced concerning the nature of Christ and/or the nature of sin, expect to hear a new theology on how mankind is saved. As one theology professor stated, “Your view of sin determines your view of salvation.”

The Bible definition of sin is found in 1 John 3:4, where it states: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Notice that this follows the proper syntax for a definition: “Sin is ...” Paul, in Romans 7:7, clearly tells us the law John makes reference to here is the Ten Commandment Law: “I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” It is important to note that in Romans 7, Paul says he would not have known what sin was except by God’s law. Ellen White is in perfect agreement with this concept. In fact, she is emphatic that this is the only true Biblical definition of sin. She stated:

*The only definition given in the word of God as to what is sin, is found in 1 John 3:4: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.” (Signs of the Times, January 8, 1894) (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)*

Sin is defined in God’s Word as a violation of God’s law in thought, word, or deed, or an omission of that which is right. In other words, sin is not only the wrong things we do, but also the failure to do that which is right. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17) The greatest sin of omission is the sin of unbelief. Unbelief caused Jesus to rebuke the disciples (Mark 16:14). Unbelief caused the children of Israel to be cut off (Romans 11:20). And unbelief will keep us out of heaven if we follow the example of Israel (Hebrews 4:6, 11).

The Word of God “is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrew 4:12) That which appears as outward conformity to the law of God does not, of itself, meet God’s holy standard. “God is love” (1 John 4:8), and

His magnificent love is manifested in giving. “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” (1 John 4:9) “God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son.” (John 3:16) Godly *agape* is expressed in giving. The opposite of giving is taking or consuming upon oneself: selfishness! Many times conformity to God’s law, will, and purposes *may appear* outwardly in one’s life, but inwardly, the heart is full of selfish wickedness.

The rich young ruler was such a person. He came to Jesus asking, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” (Matthew 19:16) Jesus told this man that if he would enter into life, he should keep the Ten Commandments. The young man replied, “All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.” (vs. 20-22) Please carefully note Ellen White’s insightful comments:

*Here was his lack. He failed to keep the first four commandments, also the last six. He failed to love his neighbor as himself. Said Jesus: “Give to the poor.” Jesus touched his possessions. “Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor.” In this direct reference He pointed out his idol. His love of riches was supreme; therefore it was impossible for him to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind. And this supreme love for his riches shut his eyes to the wants of his fellow men. He did not love his neighbor as himself, therefore he failed to keep the last six commandments. His heart was on his treasure. It was swallowed up in his earthly possessions. He loved his possessions better than God, better than the heavenly treasure. (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, pp. 171, 172)*

Some, most notably Augustine, have suggested that the true definition for sin is our human nature: Because Adam sinned, I am born a sinner. This is not because of anything I have done, but because I inherited sin, condemnation, and/or guilt from Adam. According to Augustine, as soon as I was born I was counted as a sinner in the eyes of God. This defies both the Word of God and reasonable logic and creates many more problems than it tries to solve. The Bible teaches that Adam could only pass on a fallen, sinful nature to man. Sinful here means to have a natural tendency to sin as opposed to being full of sin. This nature we receive is not accounted in God’s eyes as sin. If the fallen nature of man is accounted as sin, then Jesus would not have been able to accept “upon His sinless nature our sinful nature.” (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181) (See Romans 8:3.) According to the proponents of what has

been termed “New Theology,” Jesus had to have been born with a sinless nature, for if having the sinful nature of Adam is sin, then Jesus could not be our Saviour and, in fact, would have needed a Saviour Himself.

However, if we follow the Bible definition of sin, we do not have any such problem. Further, the plain logic of the matter is simple enough that children can understand it. A sinner is one who sins. Being born to sinful parents does not make one a sinner at birth any more than a child born to man and a woman who are painters a painter at birth. It is not until the child picks up the brush and applies the paint to the canvas that he or she becomes a painter.

Let us continue to expand our probe into the definition of sin to see if a sinner is really one who sins. To do this we will look at the Bible usage of the terms, “sinner,” “sinners,” “transgressor,” and “transgressors.” Let us see if these terms are applied to a person because of the nature he or she is born with, or if they are applied because of their violation of the law of God by commission or omission.

“Sinner” appears twenty-one times in the Bible. “Sinners” appears forty-six times. “Transgressor” appears five times. “Transgressors” appears nineteen times. Sometimes the context of the reference does not define the terms in question. But not once in these combined ninety-one times does the concept of inherited sin or inherited condemnation occur. Let us notice a representative selection of the texts that do define within their context the meaning of these terms.

## “Sinner”

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a *sinner*, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a *sinner*. (Luke 7:37-39)

If Mary was a sinner because of birth, than Simon had no reason to single her out. However, according to Luke 8:2, Jesus had cast seven demons out of Mary. Interestingly, according to the *Desire of Ages*, page 566: “Simon had led into sin the woman he now despised.” Mary’s past was one of impurity, but she had been transformed by the grace of Christ.

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one *sinner* that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. (Luke 15:7)

Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one *sinner* that repenteth. (Luke 15:10)

Both of these texts speak of the sinner repenting. Repentance means a turning away from sin. This repentance could not be accomplished if sin was our nature. Man is powerless to change the sinful nature he received from Adam. “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?” (Jeremiah 13:23) However, that nature can be overcome and subdued by the grace and power of Christ.

God is going to have at least 144,000 end-time sinless people in whose “mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God,” before Jesus comes. (Revelation 14:5) Ellen White goes even further. She states:

Every one who by faith obeys God’s commandments, will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. (*Signs of the Times*, July 23, 1902)

Notice that Ellen White does not attribute this victory to a change in nature or in our own effort, but rather she attributes the victory to *faith*. “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4) Only by faith can we be changed from a sinner to a saint and it is the great work of Christ’s faith working within us that will enable us to have the same total victory that Jesus obtained while on earth.

Let him know, that he which converteth the *sinner* from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. (James 5:20)

For the sinner to be converted “from the error of his way,” the sinner must be able to choose a different pathway.

## “Sinners”

But the men of Sodom were wicked and *sinners* before the LORD exceedingly. (Genesis 13:13)

The Sodomites were a people who lived a licentious lifestyle without restraint. It is unreasonable to think that being born a certain way makes one person an exceedingly greater sinner or more wicked than another.

The censers of these *sinners* against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel. (Numbers 16:38)

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led an uprising against Israel and met the judgment of God. God called these rebels “sinners” not for being born, but for their rebellion which He says is as the sin of witchcraft. (See 1 Samuel 15:23.)

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of *sinners*, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. (Psalm 1:1)

The context here clearly contrasts the path of the righteous with that of the sinners. This text mentions nothing about our birth.

The *sinner*s in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? (Isaiah 33:14)

Here the “sinners” and the “hypocrites” are set in parallel construction. Hypocrites speak one way and live another. This is contrasted with those who have upright hearts.

## “Transgressor”

But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found *sinner*s, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a *transgressor*. (Galatians 2:17, 18)

Paul says that if after seeking to be justified by Christ, he goes back to his old ways of life, then he makes himself a transgressor. The only way that Paul could say this, if sin was our nature, would be if he could change his flesh from unholy to holy, and then back to unholy again.

For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a *transgressor* of the law. (James 2:11)

The one killing, breaking the sixth commandment, is a transgressor.

## “Transgressors”

I beheld the *transgressors*, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word. (Psalm 119:158)

Transgressors do not keep God’s Word.

But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as *transgressors*. (James 2:9)

Transgressors commit sin by showing respect or favoritism towards persons.

There is one text in the list of ninety-one verses that seems, at first, to support the idea of original sin. It is Isaiah 48:8 which states, “Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a *transgressor from the womb*.” However, a reading of the context reveals that God is not talking about a *person* or even *humanity* as a whole, but rather the *nation* of Israel. In verse one God says, “Hear ye this, O house of Jacob.” The next six verses help to establish the context that God is speaking to Israel which was a rebellious and a transgressing people from their beginning (the womb) as a nation.

Understanding the clear meaning of sin will help us to avoid the pitfalls that even some of the reformers fell into because they accepted, in varying degrees, the doctrine of original sin which is based on a faulty concept of sin. Let us now look at some of the texts that are used to support the concept of original sin.

## Romans 5:12

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Romans 5:12)

Death passed upon all men. Why? Because all have sinned. Knowing the Bible teaching on the definition of sin prevents one from reaching the wrong conclusions on this verse. Many assume that one man’s sin (Adam’s) of itself, apart from any decision or action of his descendants, makes them all sinners under condemnation and guilt. However, such an interpretation not only violates 1 John 3:4, but also destroys the plain meaning of the following verses.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. (Ezekiel 18:20)

The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin. (Deuteronomy 24:16)

Sometimes Exodus 20:5 is cited to claim that God holds succeeding generations accountable for the sin of their forefathers. Notice how Ellen White commented on this:

“Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me.” It is inevitable that children should suffer from the *consequences* of parental wrongdoing, but they are not punished for the parents’ guilt, except *as they participate in their sins*. (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 306)

God did not mean in his threatenings that children would be compelled to suffer for their parents’ sins, but that the example of the parents would be imitated by their children. If the children of wicked parents should serve God and do righteousness, he would reward their right doing. But the effects of a sinful life by the parents are often inherited by the children. They follow in the footsteps of their parents. Sinful *example has its influence* from father to son, to the third and fourth generations. If parents indulge in depraved appetites, they will, in almost every case, see the same reproduced in their children. The children will develop characters similar to those of their parents. If parents are continually rebellious, and inclined to make void the law of God by *precept and example*, their children will generally pursue the same course. The *example* of God-fearing parents, who respect and honor by their own course of action God’s rule of right, will be imitated by their children and their children’s children; and thus the influence is seen from generation to generation. The commandments of God are only grievous to those who do not observe them. (*Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1880)

## 1 Corinthians 15:22

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:22)

Supporters of the doctrine of original sin are required to destroy the natural parallelism between the phrases “in Adam” and “in Christ.” These two phrases are given altogether different meanings. “In Adam” is taken to mean a flesh to flesh relationship of nature which man has of necessity and about which he has no choice. However, the phrase “in Christ,” instead of being given a similar meaning as natural parallelism requires, is given a different meaning. Nobody believes that we are “in Christ” by a flesh to flesh or organic relationship without any choice of our own. We are “in Christ” only when we choose to have Jesus as our Master, teacher, and guide.

“In Christ” means to follow and imitate Christ. The phrase “in Adam” means to follow and imitate Adam. Beloved, we have no good reason to say that “in Adam” means a flesh to flesh relationship we did not choose and the phrase “in Christ” means the opposite.

## Romans 5:19

For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (Romans 5:19)

The point Paul is making is that through one man sin entered and through one man righteousness entered. One must read a lot into these verses to assume that everyone becomes a sinner because of Adam and that everyone becomes righteous because of Christ. Many of the proponents of original sin say that Paul is teaching that all people are made sinners and righteous in the same manner, without any choice on their own part.

Was Adolf Hitler righteous? What about Usama Bin Laden, or Saddam Hussein? Are they righteous? Are they righteous by virtue of Christ’s death on the cross? Does God declare us something we are not? No, Romans 5:19 says “many,” not all. The many who choose to follow Christ will become righteous. The many who follow Adam will become sinners.

E. J. Waggoner, of 1888 fame, equated being justified with “being made righteous.”

The meaning of the word “justified” is “made righteous.” This is the exact term that appears in other languages, which are not composed of foreign terms. The Latin word for righteousness is *justitia*. To be just is to be righteous. Then we add the termination *fy*, from the Latin word, meaning “to make,” and we have the exact equivalent of the simpler term, “make righteous.” (*Glad Tidings*, p. 77 – original edition)

Waggoner did not believe that the righteousness we receive from Christ was merely a cloak to cover our sins but rather the “genuine article.” (*Christ and His Righteousness*, p. 62).

And so we find that when Christ covers us with the robe of His own righteousness, He does not furnish a cloak for sin but takes the sin away. And this shows that the forgiveness of sins is something more than a mere form, something more than a mere entry in the books of record in heaven, to the effect that the sin has been canceled. The forgiveness of sins is a reality; it is something tangible, something that vitally affects the individual. It actually clears him from guilt, and if he is cleared from guilt, is justified, made righteous, he has certainly undergone a radical change. He is, indeed, another person, for he obtained this righteousness for the remission of sins, in Christ. It was obtained only by putting on Christ. But “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” 2 Cor. 5:17. (*Ibid.*, pp. 65, 66)

In a series of articles first published in the *Signs of the Times* from October 1895 through September 1896 Waggoner noted:

Why Not All? The text says that “by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.” Some one may ask, “Why are not all made righteous by the obedience of One?” The reason is that they do not wish to be. If men were counted righteous simply because One was righteous eighteen hundred years ago, then all would have to be righteous by the same obedience. There would be no justice in counting righteousness to one and not to all, if it were in that way. But we have seen that it is not so. (*Waggoner on Romans*, page 102)

The Condemnation. “Death passed upon all men;” or, as stated later, “judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” “The wages of sin is death.” Rom. 6:23. All have sinned, and, therefore, all are in condemnation. There has not a man lived on earth over whom death has not reigned, nor will there be until the end of the world. Enoch and Elijah, as well as those who shall be translated when the Lord comes, are no exceptions. (*Ibid.*, page 101)

None become righteous except they choose the way of Christ and none are accounted sinners except they choose the way of Adam. It is our own fault that we became sinners, not Adam’s. We become sinners by committing sin. While we receive a fallen nature from Adam, Christ has made victory over that nature possible and if we sin, it is our own failure for not accepting the remedy God has provided in Christ. We cannot blame Adam for our sin. If Adam had not sinned, sin would not have entered the world, but he did, and sin entered. Adam was the channel through which sin entered. Yet, each individual is still responsible for their own actions.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine

heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. (Ecclesiastes 11:9)

They were judged every man according to *their* [not Adams'] works. (Revelation 20:13)

## Psalm 51:5

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalm 51:5)

As we noted last month, Aurelius Augustine (354-450), was one of the ancient Catholic Church fathers who struggled with concupiscence and when he found no victory over his problem, the only solution left to him was to change his theology so as to fit his problem. He came to the conclusion that man was helpless, even under the power of Christ, to overcome sin due to the weakened nature he received from Adam. This included not only a weakened nature, but the guilt and condemnation of Adam as well. By defining sin to include the nature we are born with, Augustine concluded that we are born as sinners. A text he and his followers have relied upon is Psalm 51:5 where David wrote, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Augustine went so far as to believe that the procreation of children was sinful. However, this view directly contradicts what Paul writes in Hebrews 13:4, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." Also, Augustine's view directly contradicts David's own words:


For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth. By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee. (Psalm 71:5, 6)

To better understand Psalm 51:5 we want to look at two concepts which theologically are called exegesis and eisegesis. These words describe concepts which are not difficult to grasp. Exegesis simply means that one gets the meaning *out of a text* from the text and from associated texts. Eisegesis means putting meaning *into the text* that the text itself does not contain nor warrant. For example, Revelation 1:10 states, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Exegesis would compare this with other texts such as Exodus 20:8-11, Isaiah 58:13, and Mark 2:27, 28, and we would understand that the "Lord's day" John speaks of is the seventh-day Sabbath. However, eisegesis would, for most people, quickly supply Sunday as the "Lord's day" that John speaks of. Please notice the following chart on the next page that clearly demonstrates that using Psalm 51:5 to prove the doctrine of original sin is based on thirteen assumptions and not a single fact. Concerning the Hebrew expression "in sin" we find the following interesting comments:

The student who has studied Hebrew will wish to examine the words "in sin" in the Hebrew text and in various lexicons. It will be observed that the preposition "in" is

translated from a Hebrew prefix consisting of one letter and a subscript, and that it is used in a great variety of prepositional arrangements. The meaning can be in, on, among, or even *without*, depending on the context. Some lexicons list eight different translations of the word (prefix). It is apparent that such a word provides a less than adequate base on which to build a major theological doctrine, such as the doctrine of Original Sin. (Ralph Larson — *The Word was Made Flesh*, p. 339)

Some have stumbled in the past because they have not been able to work out all of these difficult details to their exact satisfaction. Please remember that God "requires of His people faith that rests upon the weight of evidence, not upon perfect knowledge." (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 258)

To sum up our lesson for this month we clearly see that the Ten Commandments outline the "whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13) The violation of the Ten Commandments in action and thought, as well as the things we neglect from His law makes us sinners or transgressors. While we have inherited a sinful nature with natural tendencies toward evil, God does not account the guilt or condemnation of Adam's sin to us. We are "in Adam" when we follow the example and path of Adam and we are "in Christ" when we accept Him as our personal Saviour and "walk even as He walked." (1 John 2:6) I know, beloved, that our Father wants you always, day by day and moment by moment, to depend upon Him and draw close to Him. "God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19) 



*"Youth's Instructor," continued from p. 11*

This is the only course we can pursue as followers of Christ. We must exercise that living faith which will penetrate the clouds that, like a thick wall, separate us from heaven's light. We have heights of faith to reach, where all is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever watched a hawk in pursuit of a timid dove? Instinct has taught the dove that in order for the hawk to seize his prey, he must gain a loftier flight than his victim. So she rises higher and still higher in the blue dome of heaven, ever pursued by the hawk, which is seeking to obtain the advantage. But in vain. The dove is safe as long as she allows nothing to stop her in her flight, or draw her earthward; but let her once falter, and take a lower flight, and her watchful enemy will swoop down upon his victim. Again and again have we watched this scene with almost breathless interest, all our

*Continued on p. 14, col. 2*

# \*A Comparison of Exegesis vs. Eisegesis on Psalm 51:5

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

## QUESTIONS

## ANSWER BY EXEGESIS

## ANSWER BY EISEGESIS

1. Who is speaking?	1. David.	1. All humanity.
2. Whom is he talking about?	2. His mother and himself.	2. All mothers and all humanity.
3. What act is he talking about?	3. His own conception.	3. The conception of all humanity.
4. What does he say about it?	4. It was done in sin.	4. It is always in sin.
5. Whose sin was it?	5. His mother's.	5. All mothers.
6. What was its nature?	6. The text does not say.	6. Original sin and guilt.
7. What are the possibilities?	7. Adultery, concubinage, an evil mother, the condition of the race.	7. Original sin and guilt.
8. Who was his mother?	8. The text does not say.	8. The wife of Jesse.
9. Was she Jesse's lawful wife?	9. The text does not say.	9. Yes!
10. Was she a concubine?	10. The text does not say.	10. No!
11. Was she an adulteress?	11. The text does not say.	11. No!
12. Was her union with Jesse lawful?	12. The text does not say.	12. Yes!
13. What conclusions may we reach?	13. Any answer from #7 is possible.	13. The doctrine of original sin and guilt.
14. How does exegesis compare with eisegesis?	14. Every statement above is a fact.	14. Every statement above is an assumption.

The conclusion that Psalms 51:5 proves the doctrine of original sin and guilt is based on thirteen assumptions, and not a single fact.

\*This chart is based on page 338 of Ralph Larson's book, *The Word was Made Flesh*.

## Youth's Instructor – The Fight of Faith

There are many precious promises on record for those who seek the Saviour early. Solomon says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, when the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." God declares, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." The Great Shepherd of Israel is still saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

Many of the youth have not a fixed principle to serve God. They sink under every cloud, and have no power of endurance. They do not grow in grace. They appear to keep the commandments of God, but they are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Their carnal hearts must be changed. They must see beauty in holiness: then they will pant after it as the hart panteth after the water-brooks; then they will love God

and his law; then the yoke of Christ will be easy, and his burden light.

If your steps are ordered by the Lord, dear youth, you must not expect that your path will always be one of outward peace and prosperity. The path that leads to eternal day is not the easiest to travel, and at times it will seem dark and thorny. But you have the assurance that God's everlasting arms encircle you, to protect you from evil. He wants you to exercise earnest faith in him, and learn to trust him in the shadow as well as in the sunshine.

The follower of Christ must have faith abiding in the heart; for without this it is impossible to please God. Faith is the hand that takes hold of infinite help; it is the medium by which the renewed heart is made to beat in unison with the heart of Christ.

In her endeavors to reach her home, the eagle is often beaten down by the tempest to the narrow defiles of the

mountains. The clouds, in black, angry masses sweep between her and the sunny heights where she secures her nest. For a while she seems bewildered, and dashes this way and that, beating her strong wings as if to sweep back the dense clouds. She awakens the doves of the mountains with her wild cry in her vain endeavors to find a way out of her prison. At last she dashes upward into the blackness, and gives a shrill scream of triumph as she emerges, a moment later, in the calm sunshine above. The darkness and tempest are all below her, and the light of heaven is shining about her. She reaches her loved home in the lofty crag, and is satisfied. It was through darkness that she reached the light. It cost her an effort to do this, but she is rewarded in gaining the object which she sought.

*Continued on page 10, column 2*

# Being Clothed with the Righteousness of Christ

By Allen Stump & Onycha Holt

Suppose I have a cow. She is an old red heifer. If I call my cow a thoroughbred horse and even put a saddle upon her, does it mean that my cow is a horse? Of course she is not a horse. I might put a saddle upon the cow, a bit in her mouth and a bridle over her face, but she will not be a thoroughbred no matter what I call her. I think that the teaching on righteousness by faith is like that for many people. We proclaim that we have a sleek thoroughbred ready to race us home to heaven when in reality our steed is an old cow that cannot possibility carry us to the heavenly Canaan.

During my almost three decades of ministry I have only met one Seventh-day Adventist who openly denied the doctrine of righteousness by faith, frankly arguing instead that we must be justified by our works. So when we read materials claiming to teach us the way to righteousness, don't expect to hear that it is by works. It will always be claimed that we obtain righteousness by faith and not by works. While we usually profess that the plan of God is simple, there seems to be a lot of confusion over the issue and this is proved by all the different versions of the gospel that are preached. This was well illustrated over ten years ago by Martin Weber when he published his book, *Who's Got the Truth?* In his book, Weber tries to honestly evaluate five different views of the gospel as presented by Morris Venden, George Knight, Jack Sequeira, Ralph Larson, and Graham Maxwell. The only thing they all could agree upon was that they all could not be right. And of course that is true. As Larson stated, "There cannot be five true gospels. There cannot be two true gospels. There can be only one." (*Who's Got the Truth*, p. 122) The Apostle Paul says that anyone who brings a gospel other than his is to be accursed.

**But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8, 9)**

Paul was particularly concerned with those who would put the believers into a state of bondage with works as the means of justification rather than faith.

Of course the Bible speaks of both faith and works and they each have their place in the Christian's life. In an effort to help clarify some concepts I would like to share two statements from the writings of Ellen White that I believe bring simplicity to the matter while leaving the door open to in-depth study.

**And because the Spirit is to come, not to praise men or to build up their erroneous theories, but to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, many turn away from it. They are not willing to be deprived of the**

**garments of their own self-righteousness. They are not willing to exchange their own righteousness, which is unrighteousness, for the righteousness of Christ, which is pure, unadulterated truth. (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 65 – All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)**

**When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 312)**

Ellen White goes on in *Christ's Object Lessons* to say, "Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine." (*Ibid.*) Righteousness by faith is right doing by faith. Righteousness in action in our lives is doing that which is right and it is impossible to do the right thing when we are not in the truth. The Bible clearly depicts our inability to do anything righteous of ourselves. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5) "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah 64:6) If we expect to ever have right doing in our lives it must be God working in our lives by faith.

Before right doing by faith can occur in our lives we must first "submit ourselves to Christ." "Submit yourselves therefore to God." (James 4:7) "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God." (1 Peter 5:6) While some might think that this should be easy to do, the reality of the matter is that many struggle to want to contribute to their salvation.

**The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ. The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow. From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. 57:15. (Desire of Ages, p. 300)**

It is interesting to note that Ellen White speaks of both a title and a fitness that is required for heaven and they both are found in Christ. She states, "The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness

for heaven.” (*Review and Herald*, June 4, 1895) While we must have a title to enter heaven, we must also have a fitness to be able to stay there without marring its purity.

While the work of salvation is wholly of Christ, there is a part that we must be involved in. That part is the total surrender of our will to God’s will. God wants to perform wonderful and mighty works within and through us, but, because of His character of love, He will not force Himself upon the unsubmitive. When one makes choices and decisions character is formed, and the character formed by righteous choices and by obedience from the power of Jesus indwelling within us will bring a perfect fitness to the believer so that he may be fit to be saved in God’s kingdom throughout eternity.

The precious little book, *The Sanctified Life*, by Ellen White abounds with plain, simple, and forthright counsel concerning sanctified Christian living. We would encourage every soul who is currently studying the issues of righteousness by faith to read the entire book. It is only ninety-six small pages but it presents a great wealth of extremely valuable material. To help encourage you and facilitate your study, we have prepared the following synopsis of the book with some of the vital points outlined and referenced with page numbers for your study. It is our prayer that God will richly bless you as you dig for spiritual treasure in this deep mine of spiritual wealth.

## Principles of Sanctification

- “True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God.” p. 8
- “Bible sanctification does not consist in strong emotion.” p. 9
- “There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification.” p. 10
- Is a “daily work, continuing as long as life shall last.” pp. 10, 92
- Involves “daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong.” p. 11
- Requires “testing time to reveal the pure gold.” p. 11
- A “truly righteous man” is “unconscious of his goodness and piety.” p. 13
- “Every day” we are to “gain self-control, until that which is unlovely and unlike Jesus is conquered.” p. 15
- We should not “lower the standard of righteousness” and by our “example lead others to lightly regard the holy law of God.” p. 20
- “...God’s grace can make men fallen by nature and corrupted by sin” to become like Daniel. p. 21
- “It is impossible for any to enjoy the blessing of sanctification while they are selfish and gluttonous.” p. 25
- Paul “did not exhort his brethren to aim at a standard which it was impossible to reach.” (“The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23), p. 26
- “If we would be sanctified, in soul, body, and spirit, we must live in conformity to the divine law.” p. 29
- “Those who are truly sanctified will overcome every hurtful lust. Then all these channels of needless expense will be turned to the Lord’s treasury, and Christians will take the lead in self-denial, in self-sacrifice, and in temperance.” p. 31
- The “three Hebrews possessed genuine sanctification.” p. 39
- “Those who claim to be sanctified, while they have no desire to search the Scriptures or to wrestle with God in prayer for a clearer understanding of Bible truth, know not what true sanctification is.” pp. 48, 49
- “The clearer” the view “of the greatness, the glory, and the perfection of Christ, the more vividly” will be seen our “own weakness and imperfection.” p. 50
- Judas “professed to be a disciple of Christ, but in words and in works denied Him.” p. 59
- “John was earnestly warring against his own faults and seeking to assimilate to Christ” while Judas “was yielding to temptation.” pp. 59, 60
- To be sanctified is to “walk in humility and meekness,” to know truth, and be transformed “by the power of divine grace ... dying to self” and “overcoming sin.” p. 60
- “...the man who professes to know God, and yet breaks the divine law, gives lie to his profession.” p. 65
- “It was not God who told her that she could be sanctified while living in disobedience to one of His plain commandments. God’s law is sacred, and none can transgress it with impunity... Adam and Eve dared to transgress.” p. 67
- “There is no genuine sanctification except through obedience to the truth.” We “will love all of His commandments...” p. 67
- “...he that doeth righteousness is righteous...” 1 John 3:7, p. 68
- “It is no light matter to sin against God,”—the beasts of the field obey, the ocean obeys, the planets obey. p. 76
- “The life of John was one of earnest effort to conform to the will of God.” p. 79
- “...all who would be His disciples must bring forth fruit.” p. 80
- “The law of God is the only true standard of moral perfection.” p. 80
- “Nothing short of this obedience meets the requirement of God’s Word.” “We cannot plead that we are unable to do this.” “My grace is sufficient for thee.” (2 Corinthians 12:9) “...through divine grace we are enabled to render obedience to His commandments.” pp. 80-81

- “But he who is truly seeking for holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God...” p. 81
- “Many shrink from such a life as our Saviour lived. They feel that it requires too great a sacrifice to... bring forth fruit in good works, and then patiently endure the pruning of God.” p. 82
- We must faithfully overcome obstacles “and in Christ’s name gain the victory.” p. 83
- “The prophets and apostles did not perfect Christian character by a miracle. They used the means which God had placed within their reach; and all who will put forth the same effort will secure the same results.” p. 84
- “Unity is the sure result of Christian perfection.” p. 85
- “When assailed by temptation, steadfastly resist the evil promptings...” p. 90
- “Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law.” p. 92
- “Sanctification is a progressive work.” p. 94
- “Our only safety is to surrender our all to Him and to be constantly growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.” p. 95

## Faith


- When with “penitence and humble trust [faith] we meditate upon Jesus ... we learn to walk in His footsteps. By beholding Him we become changed into His divine likeness.” p. 8
- John was “closely united to the Living Vine, and thus became a partaker of the divine nature.” p. 55
- “We have no power in ourselves to cleanse the soul temple from its defilement; but as we repent of our sins against God, and seek pardon through the merits of Christ, He will impart that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. By faith in Christ and obedience to the law of God we may be sanctified, and thus obtain a fitness for the society of holy angels...” p. 83
- “It is not only the privilege but the duty of every Christian to maintain a close union with Christ and to have a rich experience in the things of God.” p. 83
- “The Christian life must be a life of constant, living faith.” p. 90
- “...we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here.” p. 91

## Poisonous Errors

- “Many who profess sanctification... lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their claims to sanctification upon emotions... deluding their own souls” and “lead astray many.” p. 10
- “...professed Christians” are “led astray by the false and bewitching theory that they are perfect...” p. 12

- John was saddened when he “perceived poisonous errors creeping into the church,” i.e., Christ’s love released one “from obedience to the law of God;” “the letter of the law should be kept” and “all the Jewish customs and ceremonies” were to be kept and that these were “sufficient for salvation, without the blood of Christ;” and the denial of the “divinity” of Jesus, p. 63
- “John met these errors unflinchingly. He hedged up the way of the adversaries of truth. He wrote and exhorted, that the leaders in these heresies should not have the least encouragement.” p. 64
- “God requires His people in this age of the world to stand, as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the right, in opposition to soul-destroying errors.” p. 65
- When he came “in contact with that class who broke the law of God and yet claimed that they were living without sin, he did not hesitate to warn them of their fearful deception.” pp. 68, 69
- “He [John] often asked himself, Why do not men, who are wholly dependent upon God, seek to be at peace with Him by willing obedience?” p. 75

## Perplexity, Discouragement, Darkness

- Those who are perplexed and discouraged constantly look “to themselves, lamenting their lack of faith... These persons mistake feeling for faith... They should turn the mind from self... We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God.” p. 89
- “Darkness and discouragement will sometimes come upon the soul and threaten to overwhelm us, but we should not cast away our confidence. We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling or no feeling. We should seek to faithfully perform every known duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God.” p. 89
- “No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light.” p. 90
- Paul “did not yield to doubt or despondency.” p. 96 

*“Youth’s Instructor,” continued from page 10*

sympathies with the little dove. How sad we should have felt to see it fall a victim to the cruel hawk!

We have before us a warfare,—a lifelong conflict with Satan and his seductive temptations. The enemy will use every argument, every deception, to entangle the soul; and in order to win the crown of life, we must put forth earnest, persevering effort. We must not lay off the armor or leave the battle-field until we have gained the victory, and can triumph in our Redeemer. As long as we continue to keep our eyes fixed upon the Author and Finisher of our faith, we shall be safe. But our affections must be placed upon things above, not on things of the earth. By faith we must rise higher and still higher in the

*Continued on page 16, column 1*

# FLORIDA Revival Retreat

There will be a "February Revival Retreat," February 22–26, 2006, at the River Forest Campground located in the southeast corner of the Ocala National Forest on the scenic St. Johns River. All are invited to attend.


While brothers and sisters from the Georgia-Florida area will be coming, many others from areas further north will be coming also. The River Forest Campground is 25 miles southwest of Deland and 25 miles northeast of Eustis. It is located near the St. Johns River on County Road 42, about ¼ mile west of Crows Bluff, off of State Road 44.

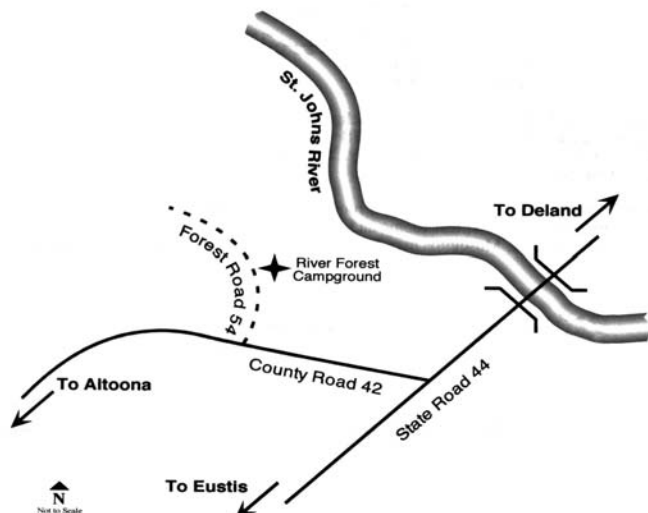
The theme of the meetings will be: "Be Still and Know." There will be much time for prayer.

Speakers will be: Willis Smith (Ohio); David Clayton (Jamaica); Arthan Wright (Miami); Jim Pendley (Florida); Ken Corklin (Pennsylvania); and Allen Stump, Lynnford Beachy, Ann Ford (West Virginia).

Haystacks will be provided on Sabbath. However other meals will not be provided, but a nice kitchen is available. You might wish to consider bringing simple fruits and pancakes or waffles for breakfast and simple salads and bean dishes for dinner, enough for your family. This way, if you choose to combine your meals with others, they will be compatible.

There are no RV hook ups, but plenty of room for RV's and tents. There is a main building for meetings, showers, rest rooms, and as mentioned earlier, a kitchen. If you can make it, please come. Mosquitos may be present, so be prepared.

For more information, please contact: Jerri Raymond, (407) 291-9565 



## 2005 Camp Meeting Audio Tapes

Please use title and tape number when requesting tapes. Suggested donation per audio tape is \$2.00. We are sorry for the delay in the preparations of these tapes.

### Vlad Ardeias, both presentations on one cassette tape:

Sharing My Experience CM 2005-1-C

Why We Should Share Our Experience CM 2005-1-C

### Bob Habenicht:

The Everlasting Gospel CM 2005-3-C

### Onycha Holt:

The Humble Heart is Mine (Part 1) CM 2005-4-C

The Humble Heart is Mine (Part 2) CM 2005-5-C

The Humble Heart is Mine (Part 3) CM 2005-6-C

The Humble Heart is Mine (Part 4) CM 2005-7-C

### Lynnford Beachy:

Sharing Our Experience CM 2005-8-C

Creeping Compromise CM 2005-9-C

### Dennis Robertson:

Preach the Word CM 2005-10-C

### David Clayton:

The Age of the Earth CM 2005-11-C

The Lawful Use of the Law CM 2005-12-C

Deception Unmasked CM 2005-13-C

The Valley of Jehoshaphat CM 2005-14-C

### Panel Discussion:

The Father and Son CM 2005-15-C

The Holy Spirit CM 2005-16-C

The Death of Christ CM 2005-17-C

### Maurice Anyango:

The Life Experience CM 2005-18-C

We Need the Oil Now CM 2005-19-C

### Paul Agyeman:

My Personal Testimony CM 2005-20-C

The Power of Prayer CM 2005-21-C

### Erwin Zoor:

Personal Testimony CM 2005-22-C

### Randy and Dee Herman, two presentations per tape:

One Way God Approves & His Way CM 2005-23-C

S.O.A.R. & Completing the Rainbow CM 2005-25-C

### Allen Stump:

God's Magnificent Offer CM 2005-27-C

Believable Promises CM 2005-28-C

The Answers to Our Doubts CM 2005-29-C

Sharing God's Love CM 2005-30-C

### Various:

Testimonies on Sabbath Afternoon CM 2005-31-C



PERMIT # 35  
WELCH, WV  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PRESRT STD

Address Service Requested

SMYRNA GOSPEL MINISTRIES  
HC 64 BOX 128 B  
WELCH WV 24801-9606 U.S.A.


*“Youth’s Instructor,” continued from page 14*

attainment of the graces of Christ. By daily contemplating his matchless charms, we must grow more and more into his glorious image. While we thus live in communion with Heaven, Satan will lay his nets for us in vain.

Conscious that the world lieth in wickedness, that he has constantly to battle with the enemy of God and man, and that in himself he does not possess power to purify the recesses of the heart, the humble follower of Christ will turn to the mighty Helper; and unto him Christ is made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. To the praying soul, Jesus reveals himself as the One who hears and answers prayer,—the One who lifts up those that are cast down, and heals the broken in heart.

The young convert has everything to learn. He should meditate and pray much, that he may do thorough work in meeting God’s standard of righteousness. “Honor thy father and thy mother,” is part of that great standard; and through the apostle James, Christ declares, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” Yet how many youth who profess to be Christians are in the habit of speaking in a disrespectful manner to their parents! God has seen fit, dear youth, to entrust you to the care of your parents for them to train and discipline, and thus act their part in forming

your characters for heaven. Yet it rests with you to say whether you will develop a Christian character.

Be entreated, then, to make an entire surrender of your soul to Christ. Take hold of his strength, follow his example, and you will have peace and rest and joy in him. Let every soul breathe the prayer that God will grant unto him according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with all might in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in the heart by faith, that he, being rooted and grounded in love, “may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,” being filled “with all the fulness of God.” (Ellen G. White, *Youth’s Instructor*, May 12, 1898) 

---

*Old Paths* is a free monthly newsletter/study-paper published by Smyrna Gospel Ministries, HC 64 Box 128-B, Welch, WV 24801-9606 U. S. A. The paper is dedicated to the propagation and restoration of the principles of truth that God gave to the early Seventh-day Adventist pioneers. *Duplication is not only permitted, but strongly encouraged.* This issue, with other gospel literature we publish, can be found at our web sites. The urls are: <http://www.smyrna.org> and <http://www.presenttruth.info>. Phone: (304) 732-9204. Fax: (304) 732-7322.

Editor . . . . . Allen Stump—[editor@smyrna.org](mailto:editor@smyrna.org)  
Assistant to the Editor . . . . . Onycha Holt—[onycha@smyrna.org](mailto:onycha@smyrna.org)