

VISO VERUM



The Only Way



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VISO VERUM

A series of booklets concerning the progress of biblical light

Title: The Only Way
Author: Tamina Bläsing

Editing and graphics: PIP

VISO VERUM (Lat.: I See Truth)
First edition English 2018

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Internet: www.pip-ministry.com

Email: info@pip-ministry.com

Ellen G. White:

AA	The Acts of the Apostles	GC	The Great Controversy
AY	An Appeal to the Youth	MS	Manuscript
BC	SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 1-7	RH	The Review and Herald
CET	Christian Experience and Teachings	SC	Steps to Christ
CT	Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students	SM	Selected Messages
CTr	Christ Triumphant	ST	The Signs of the Times
COL	Christ's Object Lessons	T	Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1-9
DA	The Desire of Ages	TM	Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers
FLB	The Faith I Live By		

Others:

ATJ, ARSH Jones, Alonzo Trevier, The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald

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The Only Way

What must I do to be saved?

This pamphlet is designed to explain why the “present truth message” of Daniel 11:40-45 is salvational for our time. Even further, that there is no other way unto salvation than believing this “present truth message” and being transformed by it. The target audience for this pamphlet are non-present truth believers, as well as present truth believers.

The Question

And brought them out, and said, Sirs, **what must I do to be saved?** And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Acts 16: 30,31

“What must I do to be saved” is the question the Lord wants everyone to ask. Most often this happens when a crisis event occurs. Then conviction of sinfulness and human inferiority is seen in the light of the One who is God and is superior. Then the comes inquiry of what must I do? Now there is a willingness to change. This is the crisis point the Lord desires for all who dwell in spiritual darkness, because then the Lord can start the conversion process. However, how to arrive at this point of surrender is not that easy.

Laodicea

“I have been repeatedly shown that our presses should now be constantly employed in publishing light and truth. **This is a time of spiritual darkness in the churches of the world. Ignorance of divine things has hidden God and the truth from view.** The forces of evil

are gathering in strength. Satan flatters his co-workers that he will do a work that will captivate the world. **While partial inactivity has come upon the church, Satan and his hosts are intensely active.** The professed Christian churches are not converting the world; for they are themselves corrupted with selfishness and pride, and need to feel the converting power of God in their midst before they can lead others to a purer or higher standard.” 9T, 65.2

Verse 14 “And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; **15** I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. **16** So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. **17** Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: **18** I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. **19** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.” Revelation 3:14-19

The church of Laodicea is in a terrible state. Laodicea thinks of itself as rich, and in need of nothing, but in reality, Laodicea is wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Laodicea is described with five negative character traits that will cause the Lord to spue them out of his mouth. This self-righteous Laodicean condition can be connected with the five foolish virgins of Matthew 25 who were lacking oil and therefore were not allowed into the wedding feast.

“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 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.’ (Matthew 7:21-23).” RH, August 3, 1886.6

“Here is the greatest deception that can affect the human mind, – for persons to believe that they are right when they are wrong. They think that they are doing a great work in their religious life. Finally Jesus tears off their self-righteous covering, and vividly presents before them the true picture of themselves, in all their wrongs and deformity of religious character. They are found wanting when it is forever too late to have their wants supplied.” *RH*, August 3, 1886.7

“God has provided means to correct the erring; yet if those who err, choose to do as they think best, and follow their own judgment, and despise the means God has ordained to correct the erring and unite them upon the truth, they will be brought into the position described by the words of our Lord quoted above.” *RH*, August 3, 1886.7

There is hope for Laodicea. God has mercifully provided the means for those who are in the Laodicean condition. In Revelation we read that the Lord counsels Laodicea to buy from Him three remedies: gold, white raiment, and eye salve. Sister White tells us what those three things are:

“The gold that Jesus would have us buy of Him is gold tried in the fire; it is the gold of faith and love, that has no defiling substance mingled with it. **The white raiment is the righteousness of Christ**, the wedding garment which Christ alone can give. **The eyesalve is the true spiritual discernment that is so wanting among us, for spiritual things must be spiritually discerned.**” *RH*, April 1, 1890.10

Before Laodiceans can buy those three remedies, they need to be made aware of their true condition. They need to come to the point where they ask the question: What must I do to be saved?. How does the Lord awaken His people who live under the Laodicean deception to ask this question? We find the answer in Revelation 3:19: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.”

“When his professed people move in blindness, yield to temptation, and lose their hold upon him, he sends them a message of reproof, of warning, of counsel; if they refuse to be corrected, if they

rise up in rebellion, and cast reproach upon the messenger whom he sends, they reject not the messenger, but the Lord. When the people refused ‘to listen to the counsel of Samuel the prophet, the Lord said unto him, they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me.’ (1 Samuel 8:7).” *RH*, January 8, 1884.16

The Lord loves His people and the way He demonstrates His love to those who have gone astray (Laodicean) is through words of rebuke. How does a rebuke reveal God’s love? The Lord knows that if he does not rebuke the one who has gone astray, this person will be lost. So it is the rebuke from God, who wants none to perish, that actually demonstrates His great love.

Before we continue with this train of thought on how the Lord awakens the Laodiceans, we would like to first look at what salvation means.

What is the definition Salvation? (*Webster 1828*)

- 1) a: deliverance from the power and effects of sin
b: the agent or means that effects salvation
c: *Christian Science*: the realization of the supremacy of infinite Mind over all, bringing with it the destruction of the illusion of sin, sickness, and death
- 2) liberation from ignorance or illusion
- 3) a: preservation from destruction or failure
b: deliverance from danger or difficulty

By definition salvation means deliverance from sin; the Lord saves us by setting us free from sin. Therefore the way unto salvation is the way of deliverance from sin. Now let us read about salvation in the Bible.

The Everlasting Gospel

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15

In *The Review and Herald*, February 24, 1874.²⁷1, Sister White says that this Bible verse contains the first gospel promise to men. What is the gospel? The word gospel means good news. So what good news does Genesis 3:15 deliver to men?

Think about it, Adam and Eve were righteous and holy. They were not defiled by sin. Yet, they sinned, and became captives unto Satan and his dominion. The promise given in Genesis 3:15 delivers the good news that the sinner can be separated from Satan’s dominion, free from sin. How? God will put enmity, hate, between His followers and the followers of Satan. This is the good news, the gospel - to be free from sin. In the following quote Sister White connects Genesis 3:15 with a verse in Revelation 14. (God declares the end from the beginning – Isaiah 46:10)

“The message proclaimed by the angel flying in the midst of heaven is the everlasting gospel, the same gospel that was declared in Eden when God said to the serpent, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel’ (Genesis 3:15). Here was the first promise of a Saviour who would stand on the field of battle to contest the power of Satan and prevail against him. Christ came to our world to represent the character of God as it

¹ “Satan knew that if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the world’s Redeemer, it was for no good to himself, that the Lord had left the royal courts of Heaven to come to a fallen world. He feared that his own power was henceforth to be limited, and that his deceptive wiles would be discerned and exposed, which would lessen his influence over man. He feared that his dominion and his control of the kingdoms of the world was to be contested. He remembered the words Jehovah addressed to him when he was summoned into his presence with Adam and Eve, whom he had ruined by his lying deceptions, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel’ (Genesis 3:13). This declaration contained the first gospel promise to man.” RH, February 24, 1874.²⁷

is represented in His holy law; for His law is a transcript of His character. Christ was both the law and the gospel. **The angel that proclaims the everlasting gospel proclaims the law of God; for the gospel of salvation brings men to obedience of the law, whereby their characters are formed after the divine similitude.**" 2SM, 106.2

It is interesting that Sister White states that Genesis 3:15 is the first promise. A promise is something which will happen in the future. Therefore, we can see that Genesis 3:15 is the first prophecy given in the Bible and it is connected with the gospel, the good news about being separated from sin and Satan's dominion.

Sister White connects this verse with the first angel's message in Revelation 14. Both verses proclaim the same gospel, the same good news. Both are prophecies. And what does Sister White tell us here? The gospel of salvation brings men to the obedience of the law. The gospel cannot be separated from prophecy, as we see from the quote above, it brings us salvation. How so? It results in the joyful obedience to the law and the transformation of our characters after the divine similitude. When is the point that we are ready to make a change? It is when we ask the question, "What must I do to be saved?" Adam and Eve became sinners after they had fallen. God gave them the message of good news, the gospel which was packaged in a prophecy. Now it was on Adam and Eve to believe and act upon it. If we want to be saved today, we only have to look back as to how Adam and Eve were delivered from sin. For we know that God's dealing with men is ever the same.²

The first angel's message of Revelation 14, which we know is the same gospel as the one given in Genesis 3:15, tells us to fear God. What does it mean to fear God? **The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.** Proverbs 8:13 To fear God means to hate evil. This is the same enmity we see in Genesis 3:15. This is the first step God wants hu-

² "The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. **The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same.** The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time." GC88, 343.1

mans to go through. He wants to put this hate for sin in us. How does He do this? He must convict us of the awfulness of our sin. The difficulty for a Laodicean is to accept conviction of sin, since he thinks he is doing just fine.

Convicting Power of the Holy Spirit

We saw from Revelation 14 that the first work of the angel's message is to put hate for sin into a human heart. This work is accomplished by convicting man of his sins and its effects. The work of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin.

Verse 7 “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. **8** And when he is come, **he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.**” John 16:7,8

As sinners we lived in spiritual darkness and it was the work of the Holy Spirit to bring light to our minds and convict us of our sins.

“When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character nor realize the enormity of the evil he has committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances he would not have done this or that for which he is reproved.” SC, 40.1

“Our sins caused Jesus to die a shameful death, that through his sufferings and death we might receive pardon. Can we receive the forgiveness of sins before we feel that we are sinners? and before we realize the sinfulness of sin? I think not. When we repent before God of our sins sincerely, we shall feel that without the pardoning blood of Christ we must perish. If we cast ourselves in

our wretchedness wholly upon the mercy of Christ, and feel that unless he saves us we perish; when we yield our own will, our own way, and plead for Jesus to control our will and actions, then we come into a position where we can receive and appreciate pardon and the forgiveness of sin.” AY, 67.1

When the Lord calls us out of spiritual darkness and the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin, then we will realize how bad sin is. We will see the sin separates us from God. Realizing this will cause us to ask the question, “What must I do to be saved?”

“As your conscience has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, you have seen something of the evil of sin, of its power, its guilt, its woe; and you look upon it with abhorrence. You feel that sin has separated you from God, that you are in bondage to the power of evil. The more you struggle to escape, the more you realize your helplessness. Your motives are impure; your heart is unclean. You see that your life has been filled with selfishness and sin. You long to be forgiven, to be cleansed, to be set free. Harmony with God, likeness to Him – what can you do to obtain it?” SC, 49.1

“The less we see to esteem in ourselves, the more we shall see to esteem in the infinite purity and loveliness of our Saviour. A view of our sinfulness drives us to Him who can pardon; and when the soul, realizing its helplessness, reaches out after Christ, He will reveal Himself in power. The more our sense of need drives us to Him and to the word of God, the more exalted views we shall have of His character, and the more fully we shall reflect His image.” SC, 65.2

The Holy Spirit convicts us and leads us out of darkness. By what means does He use? He uses truth. Truths which are vital for our salvation.

“The Holy Spirit, sent from heaven by the benevolence of infinite love, takes the things of God and reveals them to every soul that has an implicit faith in Christ. By His power the vital truths upon which the salvation of the soul depends are impressed upon

the mind, and the way of life is made so plain that none need err therein. As we study the Scriptures, we should pray for the light of God's Holy Spirit to shine upon the word, that we may see and appreciate its treasures." COL, 113.2

So we see contained within the Scriptures there are vital truths for our salvation. What are these truths?

"The grand truths of sacred history possess amazing strength and beauty, and are as far-reaching as eternity. What more important knowledge can be gained than that which outlines the fall of man, and the consequences of that sin which opened the floodgates of woe upon the world; which tells of Christ's first advent? The incarnation of Christ, His divinity, His atonement, His wonderful life in heaven as our advocate, the office of the Holy Spirit – all these vital themes of Christianity are revealed from Genesis to Revelation. Each is a golden link in the perfect chain of truth. Why, then, should not the Scriptures be exalted in every school in our land?" CT, 427.3

We see here that Sister White describes the vital truths as revealed from Genesis to Revelation as golden links in the perfect chain of truth. This chain of truth refers to the study of the reform lines which we will address briefly in the section **Lines of Prophecy** (for further study we refer you to the booklet *Line Upon Line*).

The Holy Spirit uses messages which are vital for our salvation to bring us out of spiritual darkness. How are these vital truths communicated to us? God uses His loyal workmen to bring prophetic messages to those living in spiritual darkness.

"God's servants do not all possess the same gifts, but they are all His workmen. Each is to learn of the Great Teacher, and is then to communicate what he has learned. God has given to each of His messengers an individual work. There is a diversity of gifts, but all the workers are to blend in harmony, controlled by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. **As they make known the gospel of salvation, many will be convicted and converted by the power of God.**

The human instrumentality is hid with Christ in God, and Christ appears as the chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.” *AA*, 274.2

Our Greatest Need

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work.” *ISM*, 121.1

“A revival of true godliness” is our greatest need. This should be our first work. What is a revival? Often when we consider revival, we think of something connected with the Pentecostal movement, which involves great emotions and good feelings, and is supposed to give evidence that the Lord is reviving us. However, Sister White says we need “a revival of true godliness”. Let us see what a true revival is.

What is a Revival?

“A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.” *RH*, February 25, 1902.8

Revival and reformation are two different experiences, yet they go hand in hand. If only one of the two is experienced, the designed goal of the Lord will not be reached. A revival is a resurrection from spiritual death; a quickening of the powers of mind and heart. From Ephesians 2:1 we read that we were dead in trespasses and sins before we were made alive by the Spirit.

So what is a revival? A revival is an awareness of your sins through the work of the Holy Spirit. Only the spiritually dead need revived. Once this work of revival is performed, and we have the knowledge of our true condition, then He can work a reformation in us. What is reformation? A change in ideas, theories, habits, and practices. It is acting according to your newly gained knowledge. For example: When a person has the habit of drinking alcohol, he is dead in his sin. When someone explains to him that drinking is bad, and he understands the truth, then he is revived. He has gained knowledge. To stop drinking would be the reformation, the acting according to the newly gained knowledge. So how does this revival, this knowledge come to us?

It comes to us through a message of reform. A message that convicts you of your true condition and which is designed to make you aware that you need to change, or otherwise, you will be lost. This is the message that the Laodicean church needs to hear. In the Bible we are told that Laodicea does not know her true condition. If this message is accepted, the reformation will take place and we will see those once in the Laodicean condition become “hot, pure” again, like Ephesus. So what is this message of reform which is designed to bring a revival among God’s people?

How are we Revived?

We have read that a revival is our most earnest need and that a revival is a resurrection of spiritual life, with an intellectual knowledge of our true state and our need of change. We have learned that revival comes through a message of reformation. About this we would like to now talk. What is this message of reformation and where does it come from? Let us read what Sister White says.

“When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience. ... One thing will certainly be understood from the study of Reve-

lation- that the connection between God and His people is close and decided.“ *FLB*, 345.3

“... When we as a people understand what this book (Revelation) means to us, there will be seen among us a **great revival**.” *TM*, 113.2

So when the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood there will be a revival among us. On page 585.1 of *Acts of the Apostles*³ Sister White states that Daniel and Revelation are one book, and that when we study “this book” there will be a revival among us. First, what is the main theme we find in those books that would cause a revival? We find prophecy. Therefore, we can conclude that it is the **prophetic** reform message that causes a revival among God’s people.

What is prophecy, and how can it cause a revival? Prophecy is simply a prediction about the future. Exactly how can a message about future events be a message of reformation and that causes a revival? We will present the answer to this crucial question in the next section.

Lines of Prophecy

“We must have a knowledge of the Scriptures, that we may trace down the lines of prophecy, and understand the specification given by the prophets, and by Christ and the apostles; that we may not be ignorant; but be able to see that the day is approaching, so that with increased zeal and effort, we may exhort one another to faithfulness, piety, and holiness.” *RH*, July 31, 1888.6

This is a very important passage from Sister White about our need to know the Scriptures, so we can know **the lines of prophecy** and the **details** about them. Why do we need to know the lines of prophecy and their details? So we are not ignorant. Ignorant about

³ “In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days. The angel commanded, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.’ (Daniel 12:4).” *AA*, 585.1

what? That the day is approaching. What day is approaching? The returning of Christ. Why is it important to know how close we are to Christ's coming? The answer is simple - in order to prepare for it and be ready.

“The doctrine of the coming of Jesus was to have a marked effect and influence upon the lives and characters of men, and one of the great teachers, one of the purest examples among men, proclaimed it to the inhabitants of the old world, prior to the flood, and prior to his own translation to heaven. This great event, – the advent of our Lord in all the glory of heaven, – must be brought to the attention of men, and all should live with reference to this, – the day of God that is soon to dawn upon us. The expectation of Christ's coming was to make men fear the Lord, and fear his judgments upon the transgressors of his law. It was to awaken them to a realization of the great sin of rejecting the offers of his mercy.” *RH*, July 31, 1888.2

Prophecy is designed to make people aware of the time they live in, to convict them of their true condition not only as a people, but also individually. A prophetic message, as found in the books of Daniel and Revelation, is the Lord's means to warn His people through the Holy Spirit's convicting power. A warning that tells them that they are lost unless they reform and come out of the Laodicean condition. This is the message of reform that will cause a revival among the people, who individually wake up to their true condition. As soon as those in darkness are pierced by the prophetic message, they will ask the question which is so needed “what must I do to be saved?”

This prophetic message shows how near the close of probation is, and that in order to be saved, change must come today, not tomorrow! Why is it that Seventh-day Adventists do not keep the “rules” we all know so well? Often motivation is the problem. When something is far off into the future, we think we have plenty of time, and thus are not serious about preparing, and are easily distracted.

What would happen if there was a message, based on the knowledge of Scripture, that shows our location on the prophetic timeline as being very near to the close of probation, with only a short time left? The sincere and honest-hearted, will be convicted by this message, and decide that it is high time to get ready.

Figurative Delineation

At this point we would like to refer you to studies like *The Reform Lines* and *Line upon Line* which cover in depth this subject. We will only briefly mention here what it means to have a prophetic line or lines.

“Historical events, showing the direct fulfillment of prophecy, were set before the people, and the prophecy was seen to be a figurative delineation of events leading down to the close of this earth's history.” 2SM, 102.1

When you look up the words “figurative” and “delineation” in a dictionary from Sister White’s time, you will find that it means to represent on a line. Historical events which are a fulfillment of prophecy, such as the fall of Babylon, the Cross, the destruction of Jerusalem, the fall of the Othman Empire, and so on, are to be placed on a line – a prophetic line. Sister White urges us to know the Scriptures so that we can understand where we are in history, as seen on a line of prophecy. This will make us aware of how close we are to Christ’s return, which will cause us to make things right with the Lord.

From *The Great Controversy*, 343 we see the truth that God’s dealing with men is ever the same in every reformation or religious movement. Using this repeating principle we can separate the links of one long prophetic line into multiple lines of history, and place them parallel to each other. This is how we understand and present line upon line as described in Isaiah 28:9-12.

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.
Romans 13:11

The Testing Message

“Let every discourse that does not enlighten the soul, that does not answer the question, What must I do to be saved? be cut off from your program. Preach the testing message of the third angel. It is essential that our ministers preach the truth that has a direct bearing on the message for this time, and that they present the subjects in the most simple language. What must I do to be saved, and the righteousness of Christ, are themes that are of vital importance to the people.” *Letter 29, 1895*

Here we see that Sister White takes a prophetic message (the third angel’s message) and connects it with the question of what must I do to be saved. We are to only preach a prophetic message that will convict people of their lost condition, but also of the nearness of the second coming of Jesus Christ. Our earnest need is a revival, this should be our first work. Why then should we be distracted with other topics? Think back to when you last heard a sermon on the subject of “what must I do to be saved“. Sadly, for quite some time, few such messages have been presented to the Laodcician church because she does not see her condition as described by the True and Faithful Witness in Revelation 3; and therefore, cannot see the need to preach about this vital subject any longer.

A Message

Let us read how it was through a message that the people were convicted of their sins and revived:

“John did not fully understand the nature of the Messiah’s kingdom. He looked for Israel to be delivered from her national foes;

but the coming of a King in righteousness, and the establishment of Israel as a holy nation, was the great object of his hope. Thus he believed would be accomplished the prophecy given at his birth, - 'To remember His holy covenant; ... That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.' (Luke 1:72-75)." *DA*, 103.4

"He saw his people deceived, self-satisfied, and asleep in their sins. He longed to rouse them to a holier life. The message that God had given him to bear was designed to startle them from their lethargy, and cause them to tremble because of their great wickedness. Before the seed of the gospel could find lodgment, the soil of the heart must be broken up. Before they would seek healing from Jesus, they must be awakened to their danger from the wounds of sin." *DA*, 103.5

"God does not send messengers to flatter the sinner. He delivers no message of peace to lull the unsanctified into fatal security. He lays heavy burdens upon the conscience of the wrongdoer, and pierces the soul with arrows of conviction. The ministering angels present to him the fearful judgments of God to deepen the sense of need, and prompt the cry, 'What must I do to be saved?' Then the hand that has humbled in the dust, lifts up the penitent. The voice that has rebuked sin, and put to shame pride and ambition, inquires with tenderest sympathy, 'What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?'" *DA*, 104.1

"When the ministry of John began, the nation was in a state of excitement and discontent verging on revolution. At the removal of Archelaus, Judea had been brought directly under the control of Rome. The tyranny and extortion of the Roman governors, and their determined efforts to introduce the heathen symbols and customs, kindled revolt, which had been quenched in the blood of thousands of the bravest of Israel. All this intensified the national hatred against Rome, and increased the longing to be freed from her power." *DA*, 104.2

“Amid discord and strife, a voice was heard from the wilderness, a voice startling and stern, yet full of hope: ‘Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” – With a new, strange power it moved the people. Prophets had foretold the coming of Christ as an event far in the future; but here was an announcement that it was at hand. John’s singular appearance carried the minds of his hearers back to the ancient seers. In his manner and dress he resembled the prophet Elijah. With the spirit and power of Elijah he denounced the national corruption, and rebuked the prevailing sins. His words were plain, pointed, and convincing. Many believed him to be one of the prophets risen from the dead. The whole nation was stirred. Multitudes flocked to the wilderness.” *DA*, 104.3

As John had a message that was designed to pierce the hearts of the people by showing the Jews that they were on the threshold of events which they had put far into the future, thus causing them to fear God, convicting them of their sins and bringing forth the fruit of repentance, so we see other prophets giving the same message in their time. Noah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and William Miller all had the same message. So will it be in our time, at the end of the world. The Lord again has sent a message designed to convict us of our true state that we may repent. This message is from Daniel 11:40-45⁴ (also referred to as the Little Book⁵) which warns about events which are at hand, such as the close of probation for humanity: first for God’s people and then for God’s people in the

4 Verse 40 “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. 41 He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. 42 He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. 44 But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. 45 And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.” Dan 11:40-45

5 “After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the instruction comes to John, as to Daniel, in regard to the little book: “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered.”... John sees the little book unsealed.... Then Daniel’s prophecies have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels’ messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time.” *CTr*, 344.3

world (1 Peter 4:17⁶). For further information, we refer you to the study of Daniel 11:40-45 found on our website.

When you ask people when these events will happen, their answers put them far into the future, as a result, many demonstrate by their actions that they believe there is plenty of time to prepare before those events come.

Revival leads to Reformation

Once a person dead in the trespasses of sin is revived to spiritual life by a message which calls for reform, change must take place in that person's life.

Verse 1 "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: **2** The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. **3** Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. **4** Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? **5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. **8** The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? **10** Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? **11** Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. **12** If I have told you

⁶ "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" 1 Peter 4:17

earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? **13** And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. **14** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: **15** That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. **16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:1-16

“If there is nothing more in the whole Scriptures which points out definitely the way to heaven, we have it here in these words. They tell us what conversion is. They tell us what we must do in order to be saved. And, my friends, I want to tell you that this strikes directly at the root of the surface work in the religious world. It strikes directly against the idea that you can become a child of God without any particular change. There is a decided change wrought in us if the truth of God has found a place in our hearts, for it has a sanctifying power upon life and upon character. When we see the fruits of righteousness in those who claim to have advanced truth as we claim to have it, then there will be a course of action which testifies that we have learned of Christ.” *MS 1*, 1889.2

“In giving ourselves to God, we must necessarily give up all that would separate us from Him. Hence the Saviour says, ‘Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple.’ Luke 14:33. Whatever shall draw away the heart from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. The love of money, the desire for wealth, is the golden chain that binds them to Satan. Reputation and worldly honor are worshiped by another class. The life of selfish ease and freedom from responsibility is the idol of others. But these slavish bands must be broken. We cannot be half the Lord’s and half the world’s. We are not God’s children unless we are such entirely.” *SC*, 44.1

This is the point where we have to take the message of reform which revived us and put it into action. It is not enough to simply

see how prophecy tells us how close we are to the end, we have to live accordingly. It is not enough to have the intellectual knowledge. If the “present truth message” is not going into the heart and causes all the things spoken of in the previous passages of Sister White to be removed, the message is like a dead letter to us, since there is no change in our life. - “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Isaiah 55:11

The “present truth message” of Daniel 11:40-45 is the Lord’s word and it comes to us for a reason. It is to make us aware of our situation and change our life in order to be ready. Is there another way unto salvation? How else can the Lord reach us? We see there is no other way, as He has repeatedly used this method (of sending a warning message) with the purpose to awaken and reform His people since the beginning of the man’s history in every age.

Once this reform has taken place in the hearts of God’s people, there will be a great revival seen within the church just as it was in the time of Pentecost. Sister White tells us that this time will come again at the end of the world. Now is the time to prepare. Now is the time to live accordingly in response to the warning message, that we might have characters which are suited for heaven and be partakers of the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the 144,000. (For further study as to when these events takes place, please study chapters 38 and 39 of *The Great Controversy*).

The Conversion of Saul

“During the long hours when Saul was shut in with God alone, he recalled many of the passages of Scripture referring to the first advent of Christ. Carefully he traced down the prophecies, with a memory sharpened by the conviction that had taken possession of his mind. As he reflected on the meaning of these prophecies

he was astonished at his former blindness of understanding and at the blindness of the Jews in general, which had led to the rejection of Jesus as the promised Messiah. To his enlightened vision all now seemed plain. He knew that his former prejudice and unbelief had clouded his spiritual perception and had prevented him from discerning in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of prophecy.” AA, 119.1

“As Saul yielded himself fully to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, he saw the mistakes of his life and recognized the far-reaching claims of the law of God. He who had been a proud Pharisee, confident that he was justified by his good works, now bowed before God with the humility and simplicity of a little child, confessing his own unworthiness and pleading the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Saul longed to come into full harmony and communion with the Father and the Son; and in the intensity of his desire for pardon and acceptance he offered up fervent supplications to the throne of grace.” AA, 119.2

“The prayers of the penitent Pharisee were not in vain. The inmost thoughts and emotions of his heart were transformed by divine grace; and his nobler faculties were brought into harmony with the eternal purposes of God. Christ and His righteousness became to Saul more than the whole world.” AA, 120.1

“The conversion of Saul is a striking evidence of the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit to convict men of sin. He had verily believed that Jesus of Nazareth had disregarded the law of God and had taught His disciples that it was of no effect. But after his conversion, Saul recognized Jesus as the one who had come into the world for the express purpose of vindicating His Father’s law. He was convinced that Jesus was the originator of the entire Jewish system of sacrifices. He saw that at the crucifixion type had met antitype, that Jesus had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Redeemer of Israel.” AA, 120.2

“In the record of the conversion of Saul important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. ...” AA, 120.3

What was it that caused the conversion of Saul? Conviction of his unbelief gripped his mind as he came to understand the prophecies. By gaining this understanding he saw how pride had blinded him from spiritual discernment. Saul was a Laodicean, but now he recognized his lost condition and longed to be in harmony with the Lord. Saul was changed; he saw his unworthiness in the light of the beauty of Jesus Christ. It is this condition the Lord would bring us to, so he can make us a jewel in His diadem. But how often we appear like Saul the Laodicean – self-righteous and prideful – who persecutes those who come with the message from God with eyesalve for our blindness and a new garment for our filthy rags. We resist and fight against the very means by which the Lord can reach us. This is a fearful thing. May we humble ourselves to receive the message of rebuke and reform the Lord is sending that we may be saved.

Preach the Gospel

“During these days that Christ spent with His disciples, they gained a new experience. As they heard their beloved Master explaining the Scriptures in the light of all that had happened, their faith in Him was fully established. They reached the place where they could say, “I know whom I have believed.” 2 Timothy 1:12 They began to realize the nature and extent of their work, to see that they were to proclaim to the world the truths entrusted to them. The events of Christ’s life, His death and resurrection, the prophecies pointing to these events, the mysteries of the plan of salvation, the power of Jesus for the remission of sins – to all these things they had been witnesses, and they were to make them known to the world. They were to proclaim the gospel of peace and salvation through repentance and the power of the Saviour.” AA, 27.1

The disciples gained a new experience. What was this experience? They understood how recent events of Christ’s life were a fulfillment of prophecies, and this light caused their faith in

Him to be fully established. They realized they had a work to do, to share all these things with the world. This is also what should happen today among us. Once we have accepted this “present truth message”, once we have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1Peter 2:3), and being transformed, we are to tell others of this wonderful truth. We have the same commission as the disciples, and the Millerites. But when all these wonderful things happen, Satan is not sleeping. He is walking around like a lion ready to devour (1Peter 5:8). With all his might and wisdom he will try to stop the work of the Lord to convict people of their true condition and to cloud their understanding as to the time in which they live. In the following passage Sister White addresses how Satan often is on the very ground where truth is being conveyed, trying to distract people from hearing it.

The Work of Satan

“The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried forward for nearly six thousand years, is soon to close; and the wicked one redoubles his efforts to defeat the work of Christ in man’s behalf and to fasten souls in his snares. To hold the people in darkness and impenitence till the Saviour’s mediation is ended, and there is no longer a sacrifice for sin, is the object which he seeks to accomplish.” *GC88*, 518.1

“When there is no special effort made to resist his power, when indifference prevails in the church and the world, Satan is not concerned; for he is in no danger of losing those whom he is leading captive at his will. But when the attention is called to eternal things, and souls are inquiring, ‘What must I do to be saved?’ he is on the ground, seeking to match his power against the power of Christ and to counteract the influence of the Holy Spirit.” *GC88*, 518.2

“The Scriptures declare that upon one occasion, when the angels of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them (Job 1:6), not to bow before the Eternal King, but

to further his own malicious designs against the righteous. With the same object he is in attendance when men assemble for the worship of God. Though hidden from sight, he is working with all diligence to control the minds of the worshipers. Like a skillful general he lays his plans beforehand. As he sees the messenger of God searching the Scriptures, he takes note of the subject to be presented to the people. Then he employs all his cunning and shrewdness so to control circumstances that the message may not reach those whom he is deceiving on that very point. The one who most needs the warning will be urged into some business transaction which requires his presence, or will by some other means be prevented from hearing the words that might prove to him a savor of life unto life.” *GC88*, 518.3

“Again, Satan sees the Lord’s servants burdened because of the spiritual darkness that enshrouds the people. He hears their earnest prayers for divine grace and power to break the spell of indifference, carelessness, and indolence. Then with renewed zeal he plies his arts. He tempts men to the indulgence of appetite or to some other form of self-gratification, and thus benumbs their sensibilities so that they fail to hear the very things which they most need to learn.” *GC*, 519.1

“The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried on for almost six thousand years, is soon to close. And yet how few have their attention called to this matter, how few realize that we are living amid the closing scenes of earth’s history! Satan is working diligently, binding his sheaves preparatory to gathering in his harvest. He is uniting the elements of his kingdom for the final struggle. Since his fall, he has been the great adversary of God and man, and has shown a masterly activity in trying to defeat our Saviour’s efforts in our behalf. He thinks that because so many readily yield to his temptations and believe his lies, he may yet gain some advantage over Christ, who left the royal courts of Heaven that he might defeat this wily foe on his own battle-field, and open a way whereby man might escape from his cruel power.” *ST*, May 8, 1884.1

“He is called in the Bible, Satan, Beelzebub, the serpent, the deceiver, a liar, the accuser of the brethren, the prince of the power of the air, the prince of darkness, and the god of this world. Frightful names, infernal agencies! **This fallen spirit, so malignant and subtle, is walking about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.** When there is no special effort made to resist his power, when profound indifference prevails in the church and in the world, he is not concerned; for he is in no danger of losing those whom he is leading captive at his will. **But when the attention is called to eternal things, and souls are inquiring, “What shall I do to be saved?”** he is on the ground, seeking to match his power against the power of Christ, and doubling his efforts to counteract the influences of the Holy Spirit. Angels of God, with Jesus at their head, are present to press back the powers of darkness; but no one is forced to accept Jesus, and no one can be compelled by Satan’s power to reject him.” *ST, May 8, 1884.2*

“Satan is at your side when you least suspect it, watching to find a weak spot in your armor, where he can introduce his darts, and wound your soul by betraying you into sin. He has access to minds that are open to receive his suggestions, and by long experience he has learned how to apply his temptations to the best advantage. His first effort is to keep as many minds as possible in a state of careless indifference. He will invent every imaginable excuse to keep people away from meetings where they might receive benefit from hearing the truth. He will especially work to make of none effect these morning meetings, where the Spirit of God is at work; and when he cannot keep persons away, his next effort will be to fill the mind with unimportant matters, thus preventing them from treasuring up the truths they hear.” *ST, May 8, 1884.3*

“This work Satan is engaged in at every meeting. He has different temptations prepared for different minds, and souls are continually yielding to his suggestions. He will adopt any means by which he may gain control of the thoughts and purposes of the heart. He will work to divert the mind from Heaven and heavenly things by

the absorbing cares of this life. He will produce temporary indisposition to keep you away from meetings where testimonies from Heaven will be borne, and your hearts would be impressed with the deep movings of the Spirit of God. If you attend the meetings, and your heart is impressed, he will tempt you to engage in unprofitable conversation on trivial things, so that you will forget the words spoken.” *ST*, May 8, 1884.4

“Circumstances will arise to divert the mind. Visitors, relatives, or worldly friends, or some temporal matter, will engage the attention; and then ‘cometh the devil, and taketh the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.’ These friends will make demands upon your time and strength, and thus God is robbed of the service due him. Yet you flatter yourselves that you cannot do otherwise; for how can you displease your friends? God will not bring a curse upon you for thus robbing him, but your own course of action brings its sure result. But however alluring Satan’s temptations, however natural and unavoidable they may seem to the mind that is not clear and sharp in spiritual discernment, you must not be lulled to carnal security. However dear your friends may be, if they lead you away from God they are emissaries of Satan, who works through the children of disobedience, speaks through human organs.” *ST*, May 8, 1884.5

“God will not work a miracle to change natural causes which you can control. If you place yourself and family in the current of the world, you and your children will be borne downward by it. Be wise and discriminating in regard to spiritual advantages, and gather about yourselves and your children correct influences. We may have a beautiful and fertile country; but surrounding influences may be weaving a spell upon our souls that will sink us to perdition, and our children may be lost to the cause of God because we did not place them where they would cultivate a love for divine things. We may save our own souls, as did Lot when he fled from Sodom; but the habits and customs with which we have become familiar may cling to us, and we may find that we have assimilated to them more than we were aware. This is a risk that we cannot

afford to run. We might better lose every worldly advantage than to lose Jesus, or dishonor him by our careless inattention to his requirements. It is best to obey God at any sacrifice.” *ST*, May 8, 1884.6

Left Behind

The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out and left by the way. The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their places were immediately filled by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Evil angels still pressed around them, but could have no power over them.” *CET*, 177.1

Those who do not hold fast to Jesus and his truth will be swept away by Satan’s deception and be left in complete darkness. But the places which they once held will not be left unoccupied, as others who cherish the truth, will quickly fill their places.

The Invitation

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. **And let him that heareth say, Come.** And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” *Revelation 22:17*

This is the invitation of God, come and take for free. Once we have tasted we are to invite others to come and drink of the water of life.

Verse 9 “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.** **11** For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” *Romans 10:9-11*

Verse 16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the

Jew first, and also to the Greek. **17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.**” Romans 1:16,17

The gospel, which Sister White says is the same in Genesis and Revelation, is the power unto salvation. This prophetic message has power unto salvation because it will lead you to see your true condition and come to Christ willingly and to do what ever it takes to live in harmony with Him now. The one who has true faith is made just by his faith, as faith is dead if it does not have good works. A.T. Jones once expressed what faith is:

“Faith is the **expecting** the word of God itself to do what that word says, and **depending** upon that word itself to do what the word says.” January 3, 1899, ATJ, ARSH, 8.1

Acting upon this kind of faith has power to change lives. A changed life through God’s guidance is a saved life:

Verse 38 “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, **39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38,39

Summary

The Lord cares about everyone and wants everyone to be saved. His aim is to lead a sinner dead in his trespasses to ask the question, “What must I do to be saved”. Unfortunately, the Laodicean church member thinks he has need of nothing and does not even consider asking such a question as this. Mercifully, the Lord brings a prophetic message to reveal the urgency for change, thus enabling us to see that time is running out and that we are not prepared to meet Christ. It is in realizing our lost condition that we inquire, “What must I do to be saved”. The experience of Saul of Tarsus can be ours. We too can draw close to Christ and obtain

forgiveness, and henceforth live life with a transformed heart. We are to warn others of the coming doom so that they might also have the chance to obtain salvation, a salvation free from sin. Yet, Satan will try everything to keep people in the darkness of indifference, including every form of distraction to prevent people from hearing the truth that convicts us of our present condition. May we all give the enemy no reason to gain the victory over us, but rather strive to be among those who will accept the message of love (the warning message of coming judgment) and be changed into the image of Christ, so that we might be ready when He comes.

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