

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"*

Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

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Editor's Preface

In this issue we continue to study the New Testament teachings in regard to sanctification. We find that in connection with sanctification is "obedience," the "blood of sprinkling," and "belief of the truth." Often we have assumed the Law as given from Mt. Sinai to be a transcript of God's character. Apart from the Sabbath and the Family commandments, the Ten Commandments are actually revealing the character of God from the viewpoint of what He does not want one to be or to do. Jesus brought a new revelation of God - a view point of God which can be understood by those who have accepted His gracious gift of Jesus. God so loved that He gave; and perceiving that love, we willingly submit to the transcript of His character of love - "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." To those who might have some problems with conclusions drawn about the Law in the continued study of "The Everlasting Gospel," we have provided in the "Helps" two quotations from early issues of *The Signs of the Times* which relate the Law as given at Sinai to the Law which governs all created beings of the universe. We have also asked that you reread certain "Helps" from previous issues.

While we have been writing this issue we have also had time to consider some other aspects of the cross in relationship to the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus Christ. In His glorified body were the marks of His humiliation - the scars of His pierced hands and feet, as well as the scar of the spear's thrust into His side. See Luke 24:36-40; John 20:27. Throughout all eternity as, from one Sabbath to another, we come to worship God, there on the throne with the Father will be the Lamb as it had been slain. Never will the superseding demands of the cross be made void. The universe will be manifestly superior because of the incidence of sin, but what a price God paid to secure the universe so that sin will never arise the second time.

Take time to carefully evaluate - "Messengers in Conflict."



The Everlasting Gospel - 5

In the New Testament, the verb form, *αγιαζω*, is, except in three instances, translated in the KJV by the word, "sanctify." Two of the exceptions are in the records of the Lord's prayer - "Hallowed be Thy name." (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2) This is in contrast to the noun form, *αγιασμος*, which in its ten uses is translated five times, "holiness" and five times, "sanctification." In our perception as Adventists, we think of these two words as different. "Sanctification" is the *work* of a lifetime, while "holiness" is equated with perfection, the result of a lifetime of good works.

There can be no question that the "everlasting gospel" has as its objective a holy people. The results are to be demonstrated and seen. "Here is the patience (*υπομονη* - steadfastness) of the saints" (*αγιοι* - holy ones). These "holy ones" are "keeping [not trying to keep] the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." The sad fact of life is that we who confess Jesus Christ are still "trying to keep the commandments of God" and perceive little of what it means to "keep...the faith of Jesus." First, therefore, let us note what the Bible says about being sanctified, and the resulting sanctification. We shall leave till the final part of this series the question arising from the translation of the word, *αγιαζω*, "be holy" in the third exception - Rev. 22:11.

Sanctification is basic, yea the necessary fitness to be a partaker of the inheritance promised the children of God. Two factors are involved: 1) "the word of [God's] grace" (Acts. 20:32); and 2) the "faith that is in" Jesus. (Acts 26:18) These two verses deserve careful study. In Acts 20, Paul commended the elders of Ephesus to God and to the word of His grace. It is God who builds up and who gives the inheritance by the means of the word of His grace. This corresponds to the prayer of Jesus for His followers that they be sanctified through the word of God. (John 17:17) In Acts 26, Paul is addressing Agrippa and telling of his experience on the road to Damascus. He related what Jesus said to him. Jesus plainly stated that we are sanctified by faith that is in Him of which He is the author. This is how one lives in the flesh after being crucified in Him (Gal. 2:20). In Him we receive "the forgiveness of sins" and by His faith we are sanctified. It is all a part of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 3:24)

Jude addresses his short epistle "to them that are sanctified by God and preserved in Jesus Christ." (v. 1) Paul likewise wrote to the Church at Corinth as to

those who "are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints." (I Cor. 1:2) Our sanctification is "in Christ Jesus." God has made Him unto us, "sanctification" and that for a purpose - "that no flesh should glory in His presence." (I Cor. 1:29-30) At no point in the process of our redemption can there be boasting of our accomplishments. Human ego can find no place in either the grace of God that extends to us justification, or the word of His grace which builds us up in the Christian life.

While we "are sanctified in Christ Jesus" a work of God's grace also progresses within us "through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:2) Paul speaks of this "salvation" coming "through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (II Thess. 2:13) In conjunction with the Biblical concept of sanctification is "obedience," "the blood of sprinkling," and "belief of the truth."

Obedience

We are prone to limit our thinking of "obedience" to the keeping of the Law forgetting that when Christ returns, He comes to "take vengeance on them ... that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (II Thess. 1:8) The Law proclaimed from Mt. Sinai revealed the character of God from the negative - "Thou shalt not." It was adapted to meet the needs of man in sin. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20)

"Knowing this, that the law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners... and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God" which was committed to the trust of Paul. (I Tim. 1:9-11) Those who are justified have been declared righteous, and therefore, "are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14) Does the recognition of this fact make void the Law? No, it establishes the Law of which the Law given at Sinai was but an adaptation.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ: who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14)

We have a too limited perception of what it means to keep the commandments of God. God who spake in times past through prophets - and Moses was a prophet - has "in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." (Heb. 1:1-2) [Literally it reads, *ἐν υἱῷ* - "in a son."] In the Mount of Transfiguration, God declared concerning this Son, "Hear ye Him." (Matt. 17:5) This is a commandment of God. What did this Son say from the earthly Mt. Zion?

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matt. 22:37-40)

Christ proclaimed a new dimension to the law - love, even the love manifest by God in giving His son. Those who obey the gospel face a greater demand than was ever faced by those asked to keep the Law under Moses. The adapted law was proclaimed from Sinai and mediated through Moses, but grace and truth came to be by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17, Gr.) Not only did He speak from Zion's Mount, but He also "suffered without the gate" on another hill that "He might sanctify the people with His own blood." (Heb. 13:12) The demand of the Cross far outweighs the demands of the Law as given from Mt. Sinai. The Rich Young Ruler, who had kept various precepts of that Law from his youth up, lacked one thing. When asked to give up all - denying "worldly lusts" - and follow Jesus, he could not bring himself to obey the gospel. Jesus had previously made plain what this meant. He said:

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

The "Blood of Sprinkling"

When the Old Covenant was inaugurated, Moses took the blood "and sprinkled it on the people." (Ex. 24:8) Again when he consecrated Aaron for the typical ministry of the sanctuary of the type covenant of which he was the mediator, he again used the blood of sprinkling. (Ex. 29:21) Jesus "the mediator of the new covenant" brings to His priestly ministry "the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than Abel." (Heb. 12:24) The blood of Abel cried unto God from the ground. (Gen. 4:10) Sin had brought forth death. The blood of Calvary also crieth unto God, but "speaketh better things." Through "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," God can "be just, and the justifi-

fier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26) Further by the blood of Jesus Christ, we shall be cleansed "from all sin." (I John 1:7)

There is another side to this "coin." "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy. ... Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28-29) Indeed those who "obey not the gospel" will suffer under the vengeance of flaming fire. (II Thess. 1:8) How can we say that we are proclaiming the Everlasting Gospel which is the proclamation of "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" and still seek to establish a gospel based in works. If we say, we hear Him, we hear Him say - "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (John 6:29) If then we do believe, we will follow Him to the Cross. There we accept crucifixion in Him, and from that day forth, we sense the need to die daily. (I Cor. 15:31) Recognizing a new relationship "in Christ" the "surety of a better testament" (Heb 7:22), we let the Spirit accomplish His work of sanctification as it is written:

The Holy Spirit also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 10:15-16)

Observe who will write the laws in our hearts and minds. The "after those days" are defined - "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14) We "are sanctified by God and preserved in Jesus Christ" (Jude 1). Wherein then even in "sanctification" can there be boasting? It is a matter of "surrender" of self to heed the call to the Cross, to the blood of sprinkling. "Surrender" does not spell victory by human standards so as to permit boasting; only in the Divine order of selflessness is surrender, victory. He "emptied Himself." "Let this mind be in you." (Phil. 2:7 Gr., 5)

"Belief of the Truth"

Though man chose to disbelieve God, His love responded by choosing them "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (II Thess. 2:13) The conditional element here is a return to "belief" where previously there had been disbelief.

This would mean a humbling confession foreign to corrupted human nature. It is an admission that we do not know how to direct our steps. We do not know the way. We are lost. The first expression of belief must be in the Lord Jesus Christ - and "thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:31) The verb, σωθησῃ, is not only future, but also passive. In other words, we shall be acted upon so as to realize that future state. God accepts the first expression of belief, and declares us righteous. Then in the surrendered life the work - His work - begins.

This is what sanctification is really all about. Disbelief established the fallen order in the human race; belief establishes the Divine order so that man can be fit for the heavenly inheritance. The element is truth, and the issue is God. Is He truthful, or does He lie. This lays at the heart of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Here we return to the point where the previous issue closed - the work of the Spirit of truth.

The work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification has but one objective - a return to truth, pure and unadulterated. If we are truly "sons of God" we not only will be willing to be led by the Spirit, but we will be so led. The Holy Spirit will guide into all truth. (John 16:13) An individual who refuses to search for truth or who is not willing to have his positions tested by his peers is not guided by the Spirit of God. The tragedy is that not only is his salvation at stake, but also the salvation of those who come under his influence. He may profess to believe in Jesus as his Saviour, but the failure to walk in truth reveals that he is not walking with Jesus, who is the Truth. The Everlasting Gospel seeks to prepare a people who are so walking in truth that they are walking with Christ even as Enoch walked with God, and Christ, so pleased with their company, will come and take them unto Himself that where He is, there they may be also.

Another aspect of "belief in truth" is where this places us when we believe, and our responsibility in that position. The devil, whom we in Adam chose, "abode not in the truth" (John 8:44). And unless we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, by default, we accept Adam's choice. However, by accepting Christ, being in Him, we place ourselves, not only in truth, but in an adversarial position with the devil. We join in the great controversy. Here is where the thing we ought to do begins. We put on the "whole armour of God." This includes being girded "with truth" and a "breastplate of righteousness." Protected by "the shield of faith", and "the helmet of salvation" we wield "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Eph. 6:13-17)

We often lift this symbolism from context and seek to make it stand alone, [It does make the basis for a good sermon] but Paul inserts this graphic presentation of the Christian warfare between a statement of fact and a need. He wrote that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against... wicked spirits in heavenly places." (6:12, margin) Because of this, he directs, Pray for all saints, "and for me, that utterance may be given me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak." (6:18-20)

Does not also the Everlasting Gospel, committed to our trust, place us under the same bonds? Should we not also so pray, and so speak? This is one means of overcoming, and a "work" we can and should do. It reads:

They overcame him [the dragon] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death. (Rev. 12:11)

The "blood of the Lamb" can never be dispensed with in an individual's life, whether in justification or sanctification. It is the very heart and soul of the new covenant relationship. (Heb. 12:24) It is ours, however, to speak and tell what great things "the Lamb" has done for us which we could not and can not do ourselves. It is ours to speak "as the truth is in Jesus." (Eph. 4:21) *And*, as disagreeable a task as it might be, to reveal error and those who teach that error. (Rev. 2:2) In this we lay our lives on the line even unto death. But He who asks that we follow Him, accepting the demands of the Cross, says to each who so do - "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

To be continued

Helps

"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 & Herald*, June 4, 1895)

[Review the first quotation in "Helps" in *WWN*, 1(97) p. 4]

"The principles of the ten commandments existed before the fall, and were of such a character suited to the condition of a holy order of beings. After the fall, the principles were not changed, but additional precepts were given to meet man in his fallen state." (*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 3, p. 295) "The law of God existed before the creation of man or else Adam could not have sinned. After the transgression of Adam the principles of the law were not changed, but were

definitely arranged and expressed to meet man in his fallen condition." (*Signs of the Times*, March 14, 1878, p. 8)

"The law of Jehovah, dating back to creation, was comprised in two great principles. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self. There is none other commandment greater than these.' ... The principles were more specifically stated to man after the fall, and worded to meet the case of fallen intelligences. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression." (*ibid.*, April 15, 1875, p. 181)

"Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of a Saviour's love; and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain." (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 209-210)

"When we study the divine character in the light of the cross, we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of suffering endured to reconcile man to God. We see a Father, infinite, dwelling in a light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. ... The light reflected from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent, believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom.

"In contemplation of Christ, we linger on the shore of a love that is measureless. We endeavor to tell of this love, and language fails us. We consider His life on earth, His sacrifice for us, His work in heaven as our advocate; ... and we can only exclaim, O the height and depth of the love of Christ! 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,'" (*ibid.*, pp. 333-334)

Review the last three quotations of "Helps" in WWN, XXX - 4(97).

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This is what Christianity is for -- to teach men the art of Life. And its whole curriculum can be condensed to one sentence - "Learn of Me."

Messengers in Conflict

Any discussion of the Everlasting Gospel involves the 1888 Message. Ellen G. White wrote in regard to inquiries coming to her:

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.' (*Review & Herald*, April 1, 1890)

Further, in referring to the men who were giving the message - Elders A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner - she declared them to be "the messengers of God's righteousness." (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 96) She also noted them as "His servants" to whom God gave "a testimony that presented the truth in clear, distinct lines." (*ibid.*, p. 93) This terminology in Adventism - "a testimony" and "messenger" have specific meanings and designations.

Ellen G. White wrote from St Helena, California, November 17, 1903, under her own signature, the following:

From the year 1846 until the present time, I have received messages from the Lord, and have communicated them to His people. This is my work - to give to the people the light that God gives to me. I am commissioned to receive and to communicate His messages. I am not to appear before the people as holding any other position than that of a messenger with a message.

[Let those who are doing otherwise take note]

Since Ellen White understood well her work and designation, it cannot be brushed off as insignificant, the designation she used to describe the work of Jones and Waggoner - they, too, were "messengers with a message." There are those today who are studying what Jones and Waggoner wrote and said, even as many study the Ellen G. White writings. It can be observed in publications promoting the 1888 Message, that these men are quoted as authority in doctrinal matters, even as Ellen G. White is frequently used. (For example see *1888 Message Newsletter*, Sept-Dec, 1996, p. 6, col. 2)

The problem is that careful study made of positions taken by these men (we are going to cite only E. J. Waggoner in this brief article), and what Ellen White said on basic points differ, as well as differ with the Scripture itself. The book, *Christ and His Righteousness*, is considered the standard presentation of righteousness by faith as understood by Waggoner. Dr. Leroy Froom alleges that this book contains the messages that Waggoner gave at Minneapolis in 1888 which had been taken down in shorthand. (*Movement of Destiny*, p. 189) While this conclusion is open to question, nevertheless the book is a summary of Waggoner's 1888 position.

In his book, Waggoner emphasizes that "to justify means to make righteous." (p. 51, 1890 edition) This is repeated in other places. (e.g., pp. 56, 60) Now contrast this position with the first quotation of "Helps" in this issue of WWN. One who is

justified receives, "imputed" righteousness. "Imputed" means - "to credit to a person or a cause; to credit by transferal." A synonym is given as "ascribe." (*Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*) The *Universal Dictionary of the English Language*, published at the time Ellen White wrote the statement, gives the theological definition of the word, "impute," as "to credit with the possession of righteousness." (Vol. II, p. 2626) The word used by Paul, δικαιωω, for "justify" means to "declare, pronounce righteous." (Thayer)

Waggoner in discussing the man of Romans 7 writes - "Paul... says, putting himself in the place of an unrenewed man: ...'I am carnal, sold under sin.'" (*op.cit.*, p. 85) Citing Romans 7 further, Waggoner asks, "Call you this a true Christian experience?" Asking a second time - "Is a true Christian experiencing a body of death so terrible that the soul is constrained to cry for deliverance? - Nay, verily." Contrast this position with what Ellen White wrote in *The Acts of the Apostles*: "At every advance step in our Christian [Christian - not "unrenewed"] experience, our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone, and shall make the apostles' [not his putting himself in the place of - but his own] confession our own - 'I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.'" (p. 561)

It should be obvious that some rethinking needs to be done. The answer to the problem is really two-fold. 1) Even as Ellen White stated clearly that she was not infallible (*Selected Messages* bk. i, p. 37), neither were Jones nor Waggoner. 2) Ellen White wrote in connection with the 1888 message - "The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light." (*Review & Herald*, March 25, 1890) People must not be held hostage to a message of a past generation, but with the light of God's word giving added perception to truth, walk in that advancing light. It could mean merely correcting human errors in expression. It can mean bringing the message into line with the purposes of God as revealed in Christ and communicated to "His chosen vessel." It can mean walking in the added light He gives with the passing of time. If anything, it means the discarding of the "harvest principle" of eschatological thinking. #

Let's Talk It Over

While writing this WVN [January, 1997], I received a letter from a brother in New York. His lament is indeed tragic. It read - "It is sad to see the strife and bitterness that seems to be widespread throughout the 'independents' in general today. I look forward to the day when Christ's prayer in John 17 will be fulfilled in His people."

In the section, "Belief of the Truth" in the first article of this issue, I wrote - "An individual who refuses to search for truth or who is not willing to have his positions tested by his peers is not guided by the Spirit of God." Here is the cause of disunity, as well as the solution so that the prayer of Christ might be answered. Mere submission of one's position to a group of peers is not in itself a guaran-

tee that that which is presented is truth, pure and unadulterated. The positions taken on any given aspect of truth must be sustained by the Word of God alone.

In the controversy which surrounded the giving of the message of justification by faith in 1888, Ellen White told the quarrelling brethren -

There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation. (Review & Herald, Dec. 20, 1892)

If truth can afford to be fair, and it can; if I believe that I have the truth, then why should I fear meeting with men who may differ with me, and defend my position based on evidence from the Word of God, and, in a Christ-like manner, answer any challenge raised. And why should not those challenging, when unable to disprove a position either accept it, or take it under sincere advisement for further study. This would go a long way toward the fulfilment of Christ's prayer that all His followers be one.

Six years ago an attempt was made to move the major "independent" ministries in this direction. A weekend was selected for a discussion of such key topics as; the final atonement; Sunday laws; the Apostasy in the SDA Church, how to relate; the use of the Spirit of Prophecy; Jesus' end-time prophecy; and a "Common Message" to proclaim with one voice. The inviting group, a congregational Seventh-day Adventist church, sent invitations to the major "independent" ministries - Grosboll, Standish, Spear, Marcussen, Trefz, and Osborne, and others. Only one responded favorably. Another person calling for himself and another invitee, asked how much money they would receive should they come, because "people pay to hear them." Such a spirit and attitude tells one the "why" of the disunity which exists. Added to this factor now is the scramble to get some of the "millions" [direct quote] of dollars which had formerly gone to John Osborne.

Perhaps one did not like all the topics which the hosting group had chosen. One cannot deny that most of the subjects chosen for discussion had merit. The moderator was to be the pastor of the group which was sponsoring this call for unity. Any one, having met him, could ever question but that the discussions would be handled equitably and even handedly. There was nothing to lose, and much to gain.

Because the excuses were primarily based on prior commitments, the group tried a second time suggesting that a representative could be sent, if there were a conflict of appointments. The same result ensued. Does self loom so large that one is fearful to lay his position on the line?

Recently, I obtained a copy of the book, *The Rise of Christianity*, through the History Book Club. It is authored by Dr. Rodney Stark, a sociologist rather than an historian. In some of his conclusions and comparisons I obtained a deeper insight into the present confusion and disunity in the community of Adventism than I had before. I realize that in sharing this insight, I run some risks due to certain words used by the sociologist, and their connotations in Adventism due to the Martin-Barnhouse episode of the 1950s. He chose two words, "sects" and "cults" which are an anathema in the Adventist vocabulary, and defined them. We should have no trouble if we keep his definitions in mind. He defined a "sect movement" as a "schism within a conventional religious body when persons desiring a more otherworldly version of the faith break away to 'restore' the religion" to what it once was. This answers to the present "historic" posture of many "independent ministries." On the other hand, "cult movements" are "not simply new organizations of an old faith; they are *new faiths*. ... As new faiths, cult movements violate prevailing religious norms and are often the target of considerable hostility." (p. 33)

Since Dr. Stark was writing about the beginnings of Christianity, we can use these conclusions as an illustration of the present. He perceived that Christianity started out as a sect of Judaism, and became a *cult* as a result of its doctrine of the resurrection. While this was one factor, another, in my judgment much more volatile, was the law and grace issue. For Paul to hold - "Ye are not under the law but under grace" - sent shock waves not only in Judaism but also within the Christian community of Jerusalem.

Now consider the Seventh-day Adventist Church. First it was a "sect," a breakaway from the Advent Awakening of the mid 1800s. Then, the "sect" adopted the sanctuary teaching which made it unique of all the "sects" which arose from that movement. From then on, it became a "cult" - a *new faith* - by Stark's definition. Then came the 1950s and the Barnhouse-Martin fiasco with the result we were robbed of our unique faith and ceased to be a "cult." The price paid has been spiritual bankruptcy. This change was foisted on a sleeping Laodicean church by an hierarchy bent on changing the image of Adventism.

An awakened laity, startled by the revelation of what had taken place, found a return to the status quo offered by the "many" voices which arose, a comforting experience. These "voices" merely returned the laity to a warmed over Laodiceanism. Thus the issue becomes clearly: Are we going to remain "historic" and divided, or are we going to walk in the advancing light of truth as indicated by "the messenger of the Lord"? If we choose the latter, we had better be sure that we are truly awake and not half asleep because the enemy has another delusion prepared - deception propagated under the guise of "new light." "New light" is not warmed over error, but advanced perceptions of basic truth committed in sacred trust. It is light that will lead to fellowship with one another. (1 John 1:7) How can

this be achieved?

We offer a suggestion. The point of departure from what made Adventism unique was when the hierarchy modified the teaching of the sanctuary doctrine so as to be acceptable by the Evangelical community. There is no question but that certain positions "historically" held are mere traditions and have no basis in Scripture. The final atonement and its meaning are also involved. With the end closing in upon us, this aspect of the sanctuary truth truly needs to be explored and clarified. A correct understanding of God's prophetic time clock and its significance is a must. The heart of the Three Angels' Messages is the gospel of "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." This needs to be experienced as well as understood. There is light of advancing truth breaking through in all of these areas. Why not come together, lay aside our inflated egos, and study truth with true humility? What cannot be sustained by a plain, "Thus saith the Lord," discard.

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1997 Annual Fellowship August 4 - 9

Four major subjects - the Godhead, the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Final Atonement; - Public Speaking Class in the afternoon; and in the evening, Singing and Discussion. A Fellowship you cannot afford to miss.

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"Watchman, What of the Night?" is published monthly by the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Mississippi, Inc., P. O. Box 69, Ozona, AR 72854, USA.

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Caribbean Contact - P. O. Box G M 537, Castries, St. Lucia

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