



July 1972.

"Watchman, what of the night?"

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

CAN I SAY - "I AM SAVED?"

Yesterday - I am writing this thought paper for July as the month of March is closing - I received through the mail a copy of the Canadian Union Messenger. In it was a report of an address given at a worker's meeting. One paragraph of several arrested my attention. It stated:

Seventh-day Adventists have been among the most insecure Christians that have existed. Zealous, hard working, honest and sincere - but so very insecure. Unable to answer such questions as "Are you saved?" I have met old Seventh-day Adventists, who had to be brought right back to what we may term the foot of the Cross - to reassure them of God's wonderful love.¹

This "triggered" a recall of a series of lectures given at a Spring Week of devotion on the Los Angeles campus of Loma Linda University in 1965. A friend who has since fallen asleep in Jesus gave me a copy of these presentations. The whole series of studies was on the Security of Salvation, and the first topic was entitled, "Without a Doubt". The doctor entered directly into his thesis and declared:

On a number of occasions I have asked Seventh-day Adventist groups whether they were sure of their salvation. When I have asked for a show of hands, on no occasion were more than a few raised. I have been told by those of our persuasion and by those of other persuasions that Seventh-day Adventists are a very insecure people. Why? Why can't we claim to be saved? The answer usually given is that we have been warned not to do this.²

The first study concluded with this ringing assertion - "Can I know that I am saved? WITHOUT A DOUBT!"

To the listener, and to the reader, the conclusion was and is inescapable. If I can know without a doubt that I am saved, then is there any reason not to confess the fact? Have we been warned not to do so - not to say - "I am saved!" The

answer is emphatically - "YES!" Listen to the Inspired Counsel:

Never can we safely put confidence in self, or feel, this side of heaven, that we are secure against temptation. Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are saved. This is misleading. Everyone should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation. God's word declares, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried." Daniel 12:10. Only he who endures the trial will receive the crown of life.³

Again: -

We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying, "I am saved". When this idea is entertained, the motives for watchfulness, for prayer, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist. No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God. Then, with the utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for eternal deliverance. As long as man is full of weakness - for of himself he cannot save his soul - he should never dare to say, "I am saved."⁴

How could the speaker at the Spring Week of Devotions on the L. A. campus of L. L. U. in 1965 get around these plain statements? Very simply by declaring:

It should be noted that at the time this was written, Ellen White was not referring to any virtue in insecurity. She was speaking to individuals who believed that once they were saved they were always saved, and that nothing could change this. It was a false security to which she was referring.²

The irony of all this is that the same fallacious reasoning has now been accepted by the Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate, and in the latest publication of a compilation of the writings on Revivalism, where this point is discussed, a footnote has been inserted to mitigate the force of what the servant of the Lord wrote. Here is the conclusion drawn in the footnote:

Our Lord would have each Christian rejoice freely in his salvation, the salvation he enjoys daily. And when asked, "Are you saved?" he can with assurance answer Yes. He will explain that this experience is one that results in constant dependence on God and in daily Christian growth.⁵

This is a serious situation that the plain statements of the Spirit of Prophecy can be explained away by a footnote approved by the "White Trustees." The

last known attempt to do this was over the doctrine of the atonement as taught in the Writings. This was documented by the late Elder M. L. Andreasen.⁶ It should be said to the credit of the Trustees that they did not at that time acquiesce to the request of those men who approached the committee with the suggestion. But fifteen years have passed since then, and very little has been done to stem the tide of compromise and accomodation with the religious world which began at that time with the illicit fraternization with the Evangelicals. The present problem involves a similar situation.

There is a stirring in the religious world. The Campus Crusade for Christ is active. The Jesus Movement is making an impact. A revival in speaking in tongues is penetrating religious communions whose members a few short years ago looked down their noses at the Pentecostals. Now they themselves are seeking to speak in the same gibberish. But all of the devotees of these various religious movements declare as their testimony - "I am saved!" And they ask those whom they meet in their missionary zeal - "Are you saved?" What are the youth of the Seventh-day Adventist church to answer? If we are to accept the decision of the White Trustees, we have been given the "green" light regardless of what the Spirit of Prophecy says, to reply, "Yes, I am saved". Instead of meeting this challenge head-on, we would prefer to compromise the counsel to us in the Testimony of Jesus.

In the Scriptures we are given a testimony of confession as to our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ that we can bear without fear of presumption, and yet pregnant with hope and faith. It is the simple declaration of the Apostle Paul, "I am crucified with Christ." To merely mouth it would be hypocritical, but to speak it from the heart would challenge head-on the vanity of those involved in these psuedo-revival movements who glibly testify, "I am saved!"

Reduced to simplest terms, the testimony - "I am crucified with Christ" - expresses the experience of the dying thief when he asked, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." To this, his new LORD replied, "I say to you today -

as you are crucified with Me - thou shalt be with Me in paradise."⁸ And only so long as I am crucified with Christ, this day and every day, can this assurance be mine! But interestingly, the other thief received no such assurance. He wanted down from the cross; he wanted to be able to say then and now - "I am saved!" His rejected request was - "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us."⁹ Why could this thief receive no assurance? Only those planted together in the likeness of Christ's death can experience the likeness of His resurrection.¹⁰ The likeness of Christ's death is expressed in His dying words - "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, He gave up. . ."¹¹ That which Christ demonstrated in His relationship to the Father, we must experience in our relationship to Him.

The secret is that though I am crucified with Christ, "nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."⁷ There is only one hope of glory. It is for Christ to be "in you".¹² Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and by Him only can man reach the Father.¹³ And the demonstration of the way is given in the incarnation. "The whole of His earthly life" was but "a preparation for the altar."¹⁴ "He emptied Himself."¹⁵ The Father alone appeared in His life. Thus when one can truly say - "I am crucified with Christ" - he, too, will have yielded self so completely that Christ alone will appear in his life. And until that experience takes place, no true witnessing can be given. For this witness, the world and heaven are waiting.

"The revelation of His own glory in the form of humanity will bring heaven so near to men that the beauty adorning the inner temple will be seen in every soul in whom the Saviour dwells. Men will be captivated by the glory of an abiding Christ. And in the currents of praise and thanksgiving from the many souls thus won to God, glory will flow back to the great Giver."¹⁶

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."¹⁷

All men will not be won nor captivated by the glory of Christ - the fulness of grace and truth. They will resist it; they will reject it. As in the case of Christ, it will lead to the cross. They will crucify the truth, and those in whom the truth as it is in Jesus dwells. They will do it at the same time declaring, "I am saved!" "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."¹⁸

¹D. J. Handysides, "The Righteousness of God which Is by Faith", Canadian Union Messenger, February 29, 1972, p. 67

²Richard Nies, Ph. D., "Without a Doubt", The Security of Salvation (Mimeo Edition), p. 1

³Ellen G. White, Christ's Object Lessons, p. 155

⁴Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, bk. i, p. 314

⁵Ellen G. White, Revival and Beyond, p. 42

⁶M. L. Andreasen, "Attempted Tampering", Letters to the Churches, Series A, No. 2, p. 1.

⁷Galatians 2:20

⁸Luke 23:42-43

⁹Luke 23:39

¹⁰Romans 6:5

¹¹Luke 23:46

¹²Colossians 1:27

¹³John 14:6

¹⁴Ellen G. White, "The Lord's Vineyard", Review & Herald, July 17, 1900

¹⁵See Philippians 2:7 ARV.

¹⁶Ellen G. White, Christ's Object Lessons, p. 420

¹⁷John 1:14

¹⁸Galatians 6:14

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NOTE:- During the Fall and Winter, Elder Grotheer will be available for a limited number of week-end, and/or week-long series of studies on the subject of the Incarnation. Included in these studies would be a discussion of "the divine nature" of which the believer is to partake. Any group interested in such a study, please contact the Foundation for details and arrangements. J. I. T.

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