



2 Cor. 3:18

Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

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Denying The Power

David Clayton



WHEN IS THE HOLY SPIRIT RECEIVED?

“The Scripture is clear. The Holy Spirit was to be received at conversion when a person believed and or was baptized.”

The above is a direct quote from the objections of one person. This brother makes the point that the Holy Spirit was received at the moment of baptism or conversion and he suggests that a subsequent baptism by the holy spirit is unnecessary. This is certainly not a position which can be supported from the Scriptures. The New Testament is full of examples of people who were converted, who believed, and who still received a subsequent baptism of the holy spirit.

The disciples, for example, had all believed before Pentecost. and it is clear that the experience of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ had brought them all to the place of conversion. Did they have an experience where the holy spirit was at work in their lives? Of course they did, yet it was these same persons to whom Jesus gave instructions that they were to “tarry,” in Jerusalem until they received the baptism of the holy spirit. It was these same people who were instructed that they were not qualified to carry the gospel until they had received the power from on high. The converting power of the holy spirit when they believed was not enough; they also needed the power of the baptism of the spirit before they were qualified to be witnesses of the gospel of the kingdom.

The Samaritans to whom Philip preached in Acts chapter eight are another example. Let us read the account of what took place:

*Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized, both men and women** Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, **prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:** (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. (Acts 8:5-6, 12, 14-17)*

Here we see that the Samaritans first believed, and were baptized when Philip preached to them, and then later on, in a second experience, Peter and John laid hands on them and they received the baptism of the holy spirit.

Two editions ago we published some articles focusing on the baptism of the holy spirit and the biblical experience of the laying on of hands. These articles aroused strong reactions. On the one hand, there were positive responses with many expressions of thanksgiving that we have opened up a long-neglected area of the Christian experience. But on the other hand, there have been grave misgivings from some, with one or two persons even expressing the concern that we may be opening up the door for the entrance of evil spirits.

I would like to take the time to respond to the main objections which have been raised thus far. If our comments seem at times to be harsh, we apologize beforehand, for we intend to avoid this as much as possible. Nevertheless, we want to be direct and plain in pointing out the teachings of God’s word, and the wrong principles which we believe to be present in the objections which have been presented thus far.

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Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion of the truths committed to the Advent movement, as believed and taught by the early Adventist pioneers. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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Conversion, and baptism with water means that the holy spirit is present in a person's life, but it is not the same as the baptism of the holy spirit. This is an experience which comes *after* conversion.

The only recorded instance in which this baptism of the spirit was given immediately when people believed, was in the case of Cornelius and those who were gathered with him to listen to Peter. In every other recorded case (including that of the disciples) the holy spirit was given *subsequent* to conversion. This is the testimony of the Bible. In the case of Cornelius and those who were gathered with Him, God made an exception because He wanted Peter and the Jewish believers to recognize that He accepted the Gentiles as fully as He accepted the Jews. If God had not operated in this way, outside of the norm, then it is possible that Peter would have been very reluctant to lay hands on these Gentiles. In fact, when he went back up to Jerusalem, the first accusation that was brought against him by the other apostles was

"*Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them* (Acts 11:3)." Peter had to defend himself by telling how God had led him, and his main point was,

Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? (Acts 11:17)

What really convinced Peter and the others was the fact that God had baptized these Gentiles with His holy spirit. This is why God gave them this gift before they were even baptized! It was to send a message to the apostles. But this was not His usual way of operation.

There are several other examples of persons receiving the holy spirit, not at the point when they believed, but at some point *AFTERWARDS*. It was so in the case of Paul (Acts 9:17), it was so in the case of the Ephesians (Acts 19:5,6; Acts 1:13).

If any believer desires to receive the holy spirit today and seeks to have hands laid on him, he is simply desiring to walk in the way in which Jesus directed the early church. If we criticize him for this, then the question really has to be asked, "do we obtain our ideas from the Bible?"

THE BASIS FOR RECEIVING

The suggestion has been made that in the case of the Samaritans who were converted under Philip's teaching, the baptism of the holy spirit was delayed because they needed time to be first indoctrinated before they were filled with the spirit. But does the Bible support this idea? Were the 3,000 Jewish believers who received the spirit on the day of Pentecost, any better indoctrinated than the people at Samaria or Ephesus? Why was it not necessary that they also be indoctrinated first before they received the spirit? Peter's statement to them was very clear:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ

for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38)

The Bible leaves no room for misunderstanding. The condition on the day of Pentecost was to "repent, and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." This was the condition for receiving the baptism of the holy spirit. Indoctrination was not one of the criteria.

And what about Cornelius and those gathered with him to hear Peter, were they any better indoctrinated than the Samaritans who had learned under Philip's preaching? Yet they received the holy spirit, even while the word was being preached to them for the first time.

Where does the Bible ever say that we receive the baptism of the holy spirit when we are indoctrinated properly? Jesus plainly stated:

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. (John 16:13)

It is the coming of the spirit of truth which enables us to know truth. Why do we turn the facts around and suggest that we must first learn truth before the spirit of truth comes to give us power? Again the word of God speaks:

He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Gal 3:5)

Praise God for the simplicity and clarity of His word! We receive the spirit by the hearing of faith, we minister the spirit, we work miracles, by the hearing of faith! Faith is God's reason, faith - not indoctrination - is God's qualification. The same thing which qualifies us for salvation, faith in Jesus, is the same thing which qualifies us for any of God's gifts, including the gift of the baptism of the holy spirit.

ANOTHER CONDITION?

And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. (Acts 5:32)

God only gives the holy spirit to those who obey Him. This is the truth of God's word, but the meaning of the word "obey," as used in the verse has frequently been distorted from what Peter meant it to signify. What does it mean to "obey Him," as used here? Many well-meaning persons apply this to mean that we must first demonstrate obedience to all of God's commandments before He will give us this baptism of His spirit. These brethren would count it an impossibility that God should grant the outpouring of His spirit on the basis of faith alone. But again, the word of God is too plain to be misunderstood.

. . . in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (Eph 1:13)

The holy spirit is given to those who obey, but this means, to those who obey God's appeal to "Repent, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized."

It was the obedience of faith which enabled God to bless the early believers. Nobody ever inquired whether or not they were commandment keepers before they received the blessing, the inquiry was always concerning faith. It was the blessing of the spirit which enabled them to live righteous lives, it was the coming of the holy spirit which brought the righteousness of Christ with it and infused right living into their lives. God does not require holiness before He blesses us, but rather, because He is the God of grace and mercy, He gives us grace in answer to faith, and thereby enables us to become holy.

Seventh-day Adventists on the whole, and particularly "reform-minded" Seventh-day Adventists, have never come to the place where they believed that the time has arrived for the baptism of the spirit. Because we view correctness of doctrine and perfection of

behaviour as God's requirements for this blessing, we have never, ever yet felt qualified to receive it, for who is there among us who has all his doctrines correct and whose behaviour is above reproach (despite all our nit-picking and finding fault with one another)? There is not a one of us, and certainly, none of our reformation-seeking ministries.

How sad it is! We demand correctness of one another, while we lamentingly confess that we ourselves do not possess it. Yet at the same time we declare that God requires it before He can bless us, therefore we consign ourselves and others to a life of utter frustration where we endeavour with all our might to come up to the "standard," while we are acutely aware that we are not there and it seems that we will never ever be there. What a tragedy, what a frustration of the grace of God who tells us over and over that He has given us all things in Christ, and that faith in Christ is our only qualification!

This wrong focus is the basis for the legalistic, works-oriented religion which infects Adventism from head to toe. Pitifully it seems to have permeated the thinking of us "reformers" more than even the mother church. This is why we are obsessed with what we wear, what we eat, where we go, what we do, etc, etc. This is why there are splinter groups everywhere who break away over silly questions such as, should we keep the feast days? Should women cover their heads in worship? Was Jesus crucified on a Friday or a Wednesday? Should we use milk and eggs? It is the poor idea that we become better and more acceptable to God by paying more and more minute attention to little details. It is the idea that we become perfect by the accumulation of habits. Therefore the arguments multiply as the requirements increase.

While it is important that we demonstrate Christlike behaviour in all facets of our lives, the inordinate obsession with the details of diet and behaviour

is an indicator of a serious deficiency in our understanding of the way of salvation.

CHRIST GLORIFIED

It is a popular idea among many of our brethren that before God can give us the holy spirit there needs to be earnest preparation such as making things right with others and that we should all come into unity in our beliefs. The experience of the disciples in the upper room in the ten days before Pentecost is often referred to as the pattern of the necessary preparation.

We would not deny the fact that the disciples were drawn closer to each other and that there was probably a greater unity achieved during those days of togetherness while they waited and worshipped together. However, we should not attempt to make the Scriptures say more than they actually say.

The outpouring of the holy spirit was not given before the day of Pentecost for one reason and for one reason only.

*(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that **Jesus was not yet glorified.**) (John 7:39)*

This is the reason why the gift of the spirit tarried. It did not have to do with the disciples not being ready enough. The holy spirit was given on the day of Pentecost, just as prefigured in the type, because this was the day on which **Jesus was glorified**. This was the event upon which the outpouring of the spirit depended, and until this took place, then the holy spirit could not be given. Peter testified to this in explaining by what power he had made the lame man to walk:

*The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, **hath glorified his Son Jesus**; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. (Acts 3:13)*

Therefore being by the right hand

of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (Acts 2:33)

As soon as Christ was glorified He poured out Himself upon His disciples, filling them with His own life and attributes, newly-restored to Him in His glorification. This was the event which He had anticipated when he had stated in praying to His Father,

*And now, O Father, **glorify thou me with thine own self** with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. (John 17:5)*

Paul explains more fully what happened to Jesus at His glorification when he stated:

*He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, **that he might fill all things.**) (Eph 4:10)*

This was the reason why it was expedient for the disciples that Jesus should go away (John 16:7). He had to go and be glorified. He had to be restored to the place where He was once again omnipresent, once again able to impart His own life to each of His disciples, so, He ascended far above all heavens in order that He might be able to **FILL** all things. He Himself is the very life of His people, He is the one who Himself dwells in them and lives His life through them in power, imparting to them the very same gifts and powers which He exercised when He was here in the flesh. So we are told,

*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, (23) Which is his body, the fulness of **him that filleth all in all.** (Eph 1:22-23)*

The apostles had to wait for the spirit because the time was not fully come. Jesus was not yet glorified. After He was glorified there was never again any "upper room" waiting. Never again, after Pentecost, did any believer have to "tarry," making preparation before the holy spirit was given to him. The

process in the Bible was always the same: Believe in the Lord Jesus and be baptized, then receive the holy spirit, usually, accompanied by the laying on of hands by a representative of Christ. The necessary preparation is our faith, nothing more, nothing less.

IS EARNEST SEEKING WRONG?

In one of our articles we made reference to a brother who had spent close to a year, spending each day seeking for the holy spirit out in the woods. In a recent publication the following comment was made:

If we do not have the Holy Spirit's presence, it is because we refuse to surrender to the control of Christ, because we have not prepared our hearts to receive it. It is not because we have not gone out into the woods and pleaded with God and prayed for eight to twelve hours a day for a year. God does not work in that way. That is asceticism Is this what God is asking us to do in order to receive the Holy Spirit?

I found it painful to see that a person's earnest desire for God's gift, expressed in earnest, wholehearted seeking, should have been so misconstrued. If we should accept the above reasoning then we would have to conclude that fasting for any reason is a form of asceticism. What shall we say about the ten days which the disciples spent in the upper room? Was this unnecessary asceticism? What about Elijah's fast and journey of 40 days when his heart drove him to seek the presence of the Lord with such agony of spirit that he ate nothing? What about Jesus' 40 day fast in the wilderness? Was this man's seeking after God wrong, simply because it was longer than 40 days?

Is it the length of time which causes an offence? But is not the principle the same whether we spend 40 days, or 365 days? The desire of the heart leads to proportionate seeking. If we condemn this man, we must in principle condemn Jesus, John the Baptist, Elijah and many other Biblical heroes. The

issue is not the time spent in seeking, the issue is the motive. When a person isolates himself as a means of seeking MERIT with God, then the action is wrong. When a person devotes himself to seeking God with the motive of attaining to a closer relationship with God and a better understanding of His ways, only prejudice or poor understanding would lead us to condemn him.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS

"A feeling of ecstasy or some extraordinary tingling or emotion is not evidence one has received the Holy Spirit."

This recently published statement is clearly aimed at something published in one of our articles. Is the above statement true? Yes, it is, but by not saying everything, it ends up being misleading. It is to be hoped that we are not so confused that we imagine that the receiving of the holy spirit brings no manifestations. Even in apostolic times there was, in all cases mentioned, some physical manifestation. Has God changed? Even if there was nothing else, there is bound to be at least intense emotion if we really believe that we have received something such as the baptism of the holy spirit. Whenever humans become intensely excited there is often a trembling in the body, often tears, sometimes spontaneous raising of the hands and "leaping about and praising God" (Acts 3:8).

It is a lamentable fact that some of us do not actually believe that in receiving the baptism of the spirit we actually do receive the very life of Christ. Some of us are so legal in our religion that we believe that the holy spirit is no more than the thoughts which enter our heads as we read the Bible, or the activity of the angels! No wonder our religion has no excitement, no expectation in it! No wonder we are critical of anything which smacks of the supernatural in anybody's experience. But the Bible testimony in most cases was that, yes, there was a manifestation by which God indicated to people that He had given them the baptism of the holy spirit. Has He changed? Can anyone

explain why we have no right to expect some kind of manifestation today for the same event? Is it reason that leads some to condemn those who claim to have a manifestation? What arrogance and presumptuousness to stand in judgment on another person's experience simply because we ourselves know nothing of it!

“MIRACLES OF HEALING NOT GOD'S METHOD NOW”

The above subheading is a direct quote. We are told in all seriousness that God does not work miracles of healing today, except through natural methods (using herbs, hydrotherapy, rest, health-reform etc.). This is an amazing statement. I well remember being in a group of ministers a few years ago when we prayed for the healing of Elder Malcolm McCrillis. When Mac was healed as a result, we all rejoiced. Now, some of the same brethren who joined with me in prayer for a “miracle of healing” at that time, have apparently decided that this is not God's method. Is it because we at Restoration Ministries have started to emphasize prayer for the sick why this is suddenly, not God's method anymore?

It is said:

*“let us not expect God to do what he has told us he will not do. **He has specifically told us he will not miraculously heal people today without the use of the simple remedies he has ordained.**”*

The claim is made that God does not work by miracles because of the many false miracles now being performed by Satan and his agents, therefore, we are told, God's present-day method is healing by the use of natural remedies. But if the presence of false miracles requires that God abandon this method to Satan, then the same reason requires Him to stop working through natural methods, as the agents of Satan have now adopted natural healing on a wide scale! If healing by natural methods is a testimony to the work of God, then reason would indicate that the New Agers are the agents by whom God is working today.

Many of our people are now going to New Age and secular healers for healing because they find that they are more skilled in natural healing than Seventh-day Adventists. If God will not work miracles because there are counterfeits, then it seems to me that there is far more reason for Him not to work with natural remedies because there are even more counterfeits!

But when Pharaoh's magicians mimicked God's miracle through Moses, God did not abandon miracles because of the counterfeit – He simply demonstrated conclusively that His work was superior. This was enough. When Philip preached the gospel in Samaria (Acts 8) God did not abandon the performing of miracles simply because of the presence of Simon the magician.

The position that God will only work through natural means has absolutely no support in the Bible! Jesus and the apostles healed all kinds of diseases and maladies. There was the healing of leprosy, the healing of cripples, of people born blind, born deformed, born deaf, devil possessed. Did natural healing ever restore sight to a man crippled from his mother's womb? Could health reform have restored sight to the man blind from birth? Can herbs raise the dead? Did natural methods ever cast a demon out of a person? Why do we go to such lengths in pursuing a form of godliness while we “deny the power thereof”?

The truth is, many of our attitudes are based on nothing more than human religion, nothing more than a legalistic approach to God. For many of us conversion means gradual change by effort and discipline. We don't know what it means that “if any man be in Christ he is a new creature.” (2 Cor. 5:17). We view the sanctified life in the same way, it is all dependent upon painful human discipline. The same is true of our concept of divine healing – effort, education and discipline in health principles. There is not a trace of anything supernatural in such reli-

gion, it is all the work of man. God help us! Can we not awaken to see that such religion is no better than a college course, or a study of philosophy, or training in self-control? Where is the need of a supernatural God in all of this? How can we claim that this is exclusively the way in which God works when the heathen are more skilled in practicing it than we are and have just as much, or more success than we do in applying these principles?

A miracle is a supernatural event, it is something which cannot be explained by our present understanding of physics or chemistry or natural laws. Therefore it is obvious that if God only works by natural means, then, we cannot claim that our God is a miracle worker any more. This kind of thinking produces a form of godliness – nothing more – a form without the power. We are left with nothing but theoretical religion

THE REASON FOR MIRACLES

Here perhaps is where there is the greatest area of misunderstanding. One brother has expressed this misconception in the following words:

“The purpose of healing is not just to alleviate pain and discomfort and restore life. It is also instructive and educational. Healing that does not instruct will guarantee a return of the condition.”

This brother, along with many others appears to have missed the main point of all the healing and other miracles performed by Jesus. The Bible is so plain in explaining the reason for miracles that it is difficult to understand how we miss it.

And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? (3) Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. (John 9:2-3)

Notice what Jesus says about this man who was born blind, notice the reason

why the man was born with this defect: It was so that “the works of God should be made manifest in him.” How many persons are there today, sick, languishing in impotence and even pain, of whom it might be said, “this came upon them that the works of God should be made manifest in them?” Yet, we claim that such persons can only be healed by “natural methods!” So we apply herbs and put them on diets, but the truth is, the non-Christian practitioner who is skilled in natural methods can do just as well. There is nothing in this to glorify God or that we can claim as “the works of God.” They might better be described as “the works of man.” A work which depends on schooling and head knowledge. There is no real need for the intervention of God. Educating people in healthy living is a good and necessary work, but please, let us not confuse it with the Biblical injunction to “heal the sick.”

The main purpose of miracles is not to restore health to people – it is not a way of making people immortal. God’s plan in healing the sick was not primarily to extend people’s lives indefinitely. All those who were healed ultimately died some time afterwards. Even those who were raised from the dead died again. God’s main purpose in miracles was to bear testimony to the supernatural nature, the divine nature of the message being carried. Please consider the following verses carefully.

*Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else **believe me for the very works’ sake.** (John 14:11)*

*And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and **confirming the word with signs** following. Amen. (Mark 16:20)*

*God also **bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles,** and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? (Heb 2:4)*

***Through mighty signs and wonders,** by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem,*

*and round about unto Illyricum, **I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.** (Rom 15:19)*

These verses and many others make it plain: God’s reason for miracles, including the healing of the sick was primarily to bear witness to the divine nature of the message being carried. The world was to know that God had entered human history in the person of His Son, and this message was to be accompanied by the credentials of heaven, that is, the working of mighty miracles. Natural healing will **never** fulfill this purpose! (*please ask for our audio sermon “Credible Witnesses” for a better understanding of this issue.*)

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

Surprisingly, the fact that I had hands laid on me has also been criticized. Some have objected to the fact that I felt it necessary to have hands laid on me, others to the fact that the person who did this is an SDA minister, and still others are unhappy because we are not sure whether or not he is Trinitarian.

When I desired to have hands laid on me for the baptism of the holy spirit, it is clear that I could not go to people who do not believe in this ordinance. Where should I have gone? To West Virginia? To California? To Tennessee? To Florida? How could I ask this of people who don’t even believe in it? Therefore, God opened the way for me to meet an unusual SDA minister. If people in the godhead movement find this offensive, then my counsel is, don’t follow my example. Thank God, the search for truth has not made me as bigoted and narrow-minded as it has some people. I do not labour under the misconception that there is only one truth in the Bible, or that I have all the truth, or that God only works with people who believe exactly as I believe.

It is strange that the many biblical cases of people having hands laid on them seem to have been totally cast aside or regarded as having no significance. One brother did indeed see

some significance to the ceremony, but viewed it only as an organizational tool, used as a symbolic thing, utilized by the formal church organization. In fact, this brother made the following statement which I consider pretty remarkable.

“Another example of this is in 1 Timothy 4:14, where it mentions the gift that was in Timothy that was given by the laying on of hands. Timothy’s gift was ordination.”

“. . . This is the doctrine of the laying on of hands that Hebrews 6 talks about. It is the doctrine of recognizing Christ’s work through his organized church. It is a doctrine of gospel order and organization.”

Amazing! There are listings of the gifts of the spirit in 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and elsewhere in the New Testament, but in none of these places is “ordination” ever referred to as a spiritual gift, or any kind of gift for that matter! In fact, the difference between the laying on of hands for ordination and for the receiving of the spirit is very, very clear in the New Testament. We have definite instances of people being ordained by the laying on of hands, and the same people having hands laid on them to receive the spirit. The apostle Paul was one such person. Here are the two instances in which he had hands laid on him:

*And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and **putting his hands on him** said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest **receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.** (Acts 9:17)*

*(Acts 13:2-3) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. (3) And when they had fasted and prayed, and **laid their hands on them,** they sent them away.*

Notice that when Ananias laid hands

on Paul (then called Saul) he stated specifically what his purpose was in coming and putting his hands on Paul. It was that Paul might (a) receive his sight and (b) be filled with the holy spirit. Later on when Paul was specifically ordained by God to take the gospel to the gentiles, God said, “separate me Barnabas and Saul . . .” and it was at this point that the ordination was done by the laying on of hands. A different thing entirely than the laying on of hands for the reception of the holy spirit.

GOD USES MEN

Why was it necessary that Ananias should come to Paul and lay hands on him? Had not Paul already met Jesus three days previously (and in the most remarkable way!)? Had not Paul already surrendered and been converted during his agonizing three days of blindness when he ate no food and drank nothing? Why then the need of another man putting his hands on him so that he might be able to see and to receive the holy spirit? The plain facts stare us in the face: God uses men to disseminate His blessings, therefore, men baptize others, men administer the communion and men lay hands on other men! We may suggest that this is Old Testament religion, but it was Jesus who established it. We may argue that we can all receive the benefit without the input of another human being and this is true, but this should not cause us to be so presumptuous as to condemn those who are blessed by using this God-ordained route.

Consider this fact: Our salvation does not depend upon another human being. We can be saved without the input of another human being. Does this mean that preachers and evangelists and teachers are no longer necessary? Of course not! God has ordained certain ways of doing His work and the fact that He sometimes works outside of these appointed methods does not mean that these methods are unnecessary or wrong. This kind of reasoning may be compared to the thinking which says that baptism is not neces-

sary, simply because the thief on the cross was saved without being baptized.

A POINT OF CONTACT

Several practices were associated with the significant events in the Christian experience and these were, water baptism, the laying on of hands and the communion service. *Water baptism* accompanied conversion and repentance. *The laying on of hands* accompanied the baptism of the spirit as well as ordination for church office, and in other cases, prayer for healing. *The communion service* accompanied fellowship with the Lord, in the presence of the church.

These ceremonies were symbolic and representational, yes. This is true, but this was not their only purpose. These ceremonies were also points of contact, they were occasions or events during which the faith of individuals could be focused on the spiritual truth which was being represented and they were places where the faith of man could take hold on the power of God. Let us see how Paul sheds light on this in some statements made about the communion service:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? (17) For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. (18) Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? (19) What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? (20) But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. (21) Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. (1 Cor 10:16-21)

Consider what Paul is saying here. The idol is nothing and the sacrifice is nothing. Why then is it dangerous to partake of the sacrifice offered to idols? It is because in doing this, a person actually enters into fellowship with devils! Let us consider this carefully. What it means is that devils associate themselves with the things which are offered to them in sacrifice – devils draw near to those who partake of their sacrifices. Paul says plainly, “I don't want you to have fellowship with devils.” His conclusion is, “ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils.” In the same way Christ comes close to us in a special experience when we partake of the communion bread and wine, or to put it another way, the exercise of our faith as we partake of the bread and wine enables us to partake of Christ's own life (His flesh and blood) in a special way.

This was the same principle Christ was expressing when He stated that where “two or three” are gathered together in His name, He is in the midst of them. It is vain to ask the question, “does this mean that when I am alone Christ is not with me?” To reason like this is to destroy the meaning of what Christ was saying, it is to make His words of none effect. He clearly meant that we should understand that when we meet together to worship Him, there is a greater manifestation of His presence.

ELLEN WHITE

What I have to say next will no doubt be offensive to some, but it must be said. Anybody who denies that God works, and wants to work miracles today is in conflict with God's truth as expressed in the Bible. It will not help the truth to suggest that Ellen White denies this fact, it will only destroy confidence in Ellen White. God's servants do not contradict the Bible.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; (18) They shall take up serpents; and

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Papaya

Lenworth Frankson



This highly loved exotic tropical fruit with a juicy, sweet flavor was once called “The Fruit of the Angels” by Christopher Columbus. It is not difficult for me to see why he gave it this name because of its delicious flavor and healing properties. It is without question one of my favorite fruits. The moment you bite into this sweet, succulent, soft and sensational fruit your taste buds are awakened to a truly delicious tropical treat. Whether you call it by its scientific name, *Carica papaya*, or by its other common names like *papaya*, *pawpaw*, *papaw* or *tree melon* it does not matter; it is the same tasty fruit. Although they are two main types of fruit, ‘papaya and papaw’ there are numerous varieties within these two broad fruit types reflecting different growing regions and origin of seeds.

I have always heard and read of the health benefits of papaya. For the most part however, papaya does not get the credit it deserves. When you think of eating a fruit you probably think of a banana, an apple, grapes, a plum, a pear or an orange. All of these are wonderful fruits, but most of them don’t have all of the benefits of eating a papaya. In the tropics, where papaya is grown, it is referred to as the “medicine tree” or “melon of health” by many, and for very good reasons.

Papayas are filled with nutrients. In fact, a single serving of papaya has 150

percent of your daily allowance of Vitamin C, one of the most effective antioxidants in blocking LDL oxidation (formation of bad cholesterol). It’s also associated with high levels of HDL (good cholesterol) Papayas are a great source of beta-carotene, an important antioxidant that helps fight free radicals, the beginning of disease. Papayas also supply about 2 percent of your RDA for iron, and 4 percent of your daily calcium allowance. It’s also an excellent source of Vitamin A, Vitamin E, Folic Acid, Potassium, Copper, Phosphorus, Iron and Fiber.

The fact has been well documented that the fruit has a powerful protein-digesting enzyme called “papain”. Papain is found in the unripe fruit as well as other parts of the plant. Papain’s action resembles that of two well-known digestive enzymes in the human stomach, pepsin and trypsin. The papain is a large part of what makes papaya a recommended fruit and juice of practitioners for people with stomach ailments. Papaya helps in the treatment of heartburn, stomach distress, diarrhea and ulcers. The juice of the papaya aids in relieving infections of the colon and has a tendency to break down pus and mucus reached by the juice. Case studies indicate that this food taken alone for two or three days has a highly beneficial tonic effect upon the stomach and intestines. The seeds are excellent for expelling worms and can be taken with a little honey. For those who are experiencing intestinal worm problems, chew and swallow two teaspoonfuls of seeds after each principal meal (three times a day).

The unique protein-digesting enzyme has been shown also to help lower inflammation and improve healing from burns. Papain is often used to make digestive enzyme dietary supplements as well. The ripe fruit is easily digestible and prevents constipation. Eating papaya regularly lowers blood pressure and

cholesterol which helps prevent strokes and fights heart and bowel disease, while clearing your complexion. Many also believe that by eating papaya on a regular basis you can help to prevent, or assist your body in healing from major illnesses such as cancer, arthritis, liver and celiac disease.

The nutrients in papaya help prevent the oxidation of cholesterol in your body as mentioned earlier. This is important because when cholesterol becomes oxidized it can stick to your blood vessel walls, leading to plaque build-up that can cause heart attacks and strokes. It is said that papaya is known for lowering inflammation in the body. This benefit is well appreciated by people suffering from asthma, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and even burns. Papaya supports our immune system in that it is rich in vitamins A and C therefore it is an excellent fruit to eat to keep your immune system operating in tip top shape. Promoting a healthy immune system is something we can never overdo.

Our eyes and lungs also benefit from eating papaya. By eating this fruit it has been discovered that our eyes are protected against macular degeneration, the most common cause of vision loss among the elderly, along with promoting lung health especially if you’re exposed to a lot of secondhand smoke.

Papaya is known to help in the fight against prostate cancer which is good news for men. It is rich in lycopene, which is known to prevent damage to our DNA. Studies have shown that men who eat the most lycopene-rich fruits and vegetables, including tomatoes, apricots, pink grapefruit, watermelon, papaya, and guava, were eighty two percent less likely to have prostate cancer than those who ate the least.

Another well documented health benefit is that papaya contains nutrients,

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Tennessee Flood

Early in May, brothers Howard Williams and I (David Clayton) travelled to the Lobelville area in western Tennessee where we spent a few days visiting with brethren and holding meetings. The meetings were good and well attended. However, while we were there we had an experience which I, will not forget quickly. The first indicator of it was that on the Sabbath while we were having meetings, the rain fell steadily all day. By the time it was evening, most people decided that it would be best to go home in case there was flooding and so we cancelled the last meeting. However, a few brave souls decided to stay behind for further discussions and for special prayer. By the time we all left for home, some sections of the road were already flooded out, but we were all able to get home.

The next morning we had our first taste of what it is like to be in the vicinity of a tornado. Sister Melba, with whom we were staying, awakened us at about 4.00 a.m. with the news that a tornado was heading our way. We had to immediately rush to the basement of the house where we waited tensely until the radio gave us the news that the tornado had passed by.

Rain started again early in the morning and the fields soon became waterlogged. However, everybody was fairly relaxed, there had been flooding before and as recently as the previous year (2009) there had been a flood which they declared to be a one-in-fifty years flood. But the water had never risen higher than a certain point. However, this morning as we watched the rising waters, there was concern, followed by alarm as it passed that certain point and eventually covered the entire field. There was a small motorized plow standing in the fields and we could gauge the speed at which the water was rising by looking at different points on the plow as they disappeared beneath what was becoming a raging torrent.

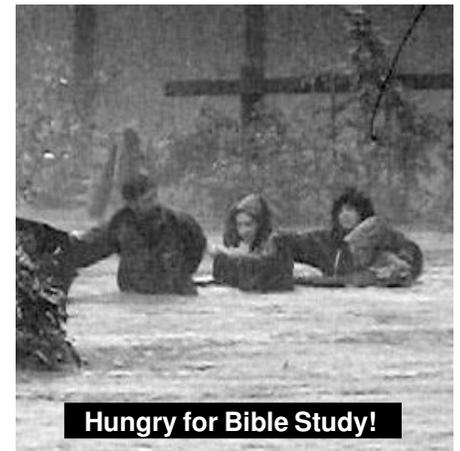
Soon, all the low-lying areas that we could see were covered to a height of several feet as the waters continued to rise and to flow more swiftly. Melba's relatives had some horses in the field and we watched as they squeezed together on a little patch of ground which remained above the water. Although they were some distance away, we could tell by their movements that they were scared. Melba's house was on higher ground, but when the waters began to cover the base of the house, Howard and I thought it prudent to pray and we petitioned the Lord to hold up the deluge. It was with some relief that we finally noticed that the water level had stopped rising (gauging by the marks on the plow). Melba's basement was by this time completely filled with water to a height of five feet. Everything in it was completely inundated.

After a few hours of this, we began to relax as we noticed that the water level on the plow was not just staying at one place, but that actually, it was going down.

We had been scheduled to have a Bible study at Melba's home that day, but of course, this was now not possible. Nobody could come in as the driveway was completely cut off from the road. The bridge which led into Melba's driveway had disappeared beneath the moving sea of water which covered everything except the taller trees. However, sometime close to the time when the Bible study was scheduled to begin, I was amazed to see what looked like four people struggling through chest-high water and seemingly heading in our direction. This was so amazing that I took a bit of video footage. As they came closer, I grew even more amazed when I realized that it was the Vanderson family, some folks who had attended the meetings the previous day. To say that they were wet would be a gross understatement. They had literally come through the flood in water which was up to their

necks in some places. Being unable to come by the road they had come across the hills through the bushes, but in spite of this, still had to cross through dangerously high water and strong currents. As we wondered what had brought them there, they explained that they had been trying to find a way to come from earlier in the day, because they could not get the Bible study from their minds and finally, as the time approached for it they had decided to go across the hills and to cross through the flood. They had come well prepared and had taken extra clothing to change into. This was the first time in my life that I had ever seen this kind of hunger for Bible study and this family proved that it was not a passing desire, because they returned the following morning and evening, and every day that we were there for more studies.

This flood was said to be a once-in-five-hundred-years flood. It did great damage in the area and many suffered major loss. Melba's driveway which was a few hundred yards long was



completely covered with lumber which had floated down from a nearby lumber yard – and I mean it was covered! I had never seen so much lumber in my life! It was piled up to a height of several feet and covered every foot of the driveway. It seemed like the flood had picked up every piece of lumber from the yard and repacked it in Sister

Melba's driveway. It was an amazing sight

One of the tragedies which hit us close to home was the loss of Brother Abraham Herschberger's entire home and crop. Thank God, his life and the lives of his family were spared, but their loss was comprehensive. As the waters rose to the level of the floor of his house, Abraham decided to leave and to move his family to an abandoned mining tunnel on higher ground. This was God's prompting because, as Abraham told me afterwards, he had no thought that his house would be destroyed, insomuch that he left all his money at home. He had an upper portion to his house which was quite high and at a level which was above where the flood waters were likely to reach. However, the water simply dismantled his house and took away the pieces. Afterwards, all that could be found were bits and pieces and scattered furniture and utensils. Two of his horses were also killed.

As Abraham was leaving he stopped by his neighbour who lived on a little higher ground in a trailer. Abraham strongly urged him to get out, along with his wife and grown son and to come with them. However, they refused, saying that they did not think the waters would rise so high, so Abraham and his family left them and went up to the mine. After a while, Abraham clambered down to a point where he could see his house, and all he could

see was the place where it had been, with a torrent flowing over the spot. It had been washed away. He waded through the rapidly rising current to again beg his neighbours to leave and to come with him. By this time the water had reached their trailer, but was not very high up yet. Again, they refused, saying that no flood had ever come that high and they did not expect this one to rise any higher. Again Abraham was forced to leave them.

Some time later, Abraham said he heard a sound like a dog howling. He clambered down to listen more closely and realized it was somebody crying out. "Where are you?" he shouted. By following the cries he was able to get closer to the person by struggling through water which was up to his neck! Abraham had to retain his footing by clinging to shrubs and trees. Finally, he came upon the person who was crying out. The person was clinging to the fence and only his face was above water. It was the same man from the trailer! He and his family had decided to leave when the water rose too high for them to remain, but by then, it was too late. The son managed to clamber to higher ground, but the man and his wife were washed away. He clung to her hand as they were tossed about by the torrent, sometimes below the water, sometimes above until they were stopped by the fence. Now Abraham said, "take my hand, we must go." But the man replied, "I can't." "Why can't you?" Was Abraham's re-

sponse. "Because I am holding on to my wife," the man said. She was beneath the water! Abraham had to convince this poor man that his wife was already dead and that he could be of no more help to her, before he finally let her go and came with Abraham. His life was saved, but not his wife's. What a terrible lesson to learn, too late. It is a story which is filled with implications for the spiritual life. God help us all to heed His words before it is too late.

The days following the flood were busy days for everyone. People were busy helping one another and cleaning up their own places. Brother Howard and I tried to clean out sister Melba's basement and after a days work, we succeeded in getting all the stuff out and cleaning up the basement, but almost everything which she had stored there was ruined. Nevertheless, she was much better off than a lot of people.

On our final night in Tennessee, we had a meeting at Melba's home. There were 23 people in attendance and we had a blessed time. We ended with the hope that God would make it possible for us to meet again soon. The following day, we were taken to the airport in Nashville by – the Vandersons of course. They would not miss the opportunity for one last chance to talk about spiritual things. God will surely reward the strong desire of this family for more of what He has to give.



Papaya

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such as fiber and folate which are known to help prevent colon cancer. Its fiber, for instance, helps bind with and rid the body of cancer-causing toxins in the colon. Researchers from Japan documented papaya's dramatic anticancer effect against a broad range of lab-grown tumors, including cancers of the cervix, breast, liver, lung and pancreas. The researchers used an extract made from dried papaya

leaves, and the anticancer effects were stronger when cells received larger doses of the tea.

In a paper published in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, the researchers also documented for the first time that papaya leaf extract contains molecules which help to regulate the immune system, in addition to papaya's direct anti-tumor effect on various cancers. The papaya extract did not have any toxic effects on normal cells, un-

like many common cancer therapy regimens. The healing effects of the papaya extract on cancer without toxicity is well known and has previously been used in traditional medicine.

In some cultures the leaves are used as a refreshing tea. Chop up three leaves and cook in one liter of water. Simmer until the water is reduced to half, strain and store in the refrigerator. For preventative measures it is used much the same way that the Japanese

drink green tea.

Papaya is also good for the skin. Intake of papaya reduces the effects of stress and strain of modern life on the skin. Its enzymes help in the removal of dead cells and lift away dry skin. The antioxidants in papaya control premature ageing of the skin, thus imparting a youthful look. Papaya's powerful fruit enzymes are known to aid and accelerate healing in skin disorders such as acne. The skin of the fruit can be used as an external treatment for wounds or areas that will not heal quickly. You can apply papaya to your skin to relieve the itch and irritation from mosquito bites. It is used in many skin care products today. It provides a natural face lift and skin rejuvenation, producing a wonderful and natural glow to the skin and it can be used on all skin types.

Raw papaya is excellent as a meat tenderizer due to its digestive enzyme while the green papaya or papaw is often eaten as a vegetable in savory dishes. In the West Indies, the young leaves are also cooked and eaten like spinach and the seeds may be dried then ground in a mortar and pestle and used like pepper.

Aside from bringing the delectable taste of the tropics to our taste buds, papayas are beneficial as a health food. It also has bleaching properties and for this reason it is a primary ingredient in soaps, lotions and other whitening products. Papayas are excellent sources of antioxidants rich in vitamins including C, A, E, K folate, potassium and fiber. Promoting good digestion, fighting heart disease, building a strong immune system, protecting our eyes and lungs, reducing inflammation and fighting cancer are some of its wonderful and incredible properties.

The health benefits of papaya are truly advantageous to our physical needs consequently adding it to our diet should be a priority. For me the papaya has definitely earned its place among the ranks of the "heavy hitters".



Denying The Power

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*if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; **they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.** (Mark 16:17-18)*

This is the plain teaching of Christ Himself, yet it is a sad fact that more and more we find people and ministries in independent Adventism depending more and more on the writings of Ellen White to direct them, and less and less on the Bible. In articles and publications we find masses of quotes from Ellen White and very little from the Bible. These well-meaning but misguided brethren are willing to abandon the entire mass of evidence presented in the Scriptures, in favour of a position which they wrongly perceive Ellen White to be advocating.

One disgruntled brother once commented to me that Adventism is an "inbred movement." I was not happy with his statement at the time, but today, I understand better what he was saying. When our main evidence for what we believe is the writings of Ellen White, how can we ever hope to deliver a message to the world? When our beliefs have to depend on what Ellen White says in order to be established, how can we ever be anything other than a little annoying appendage to the Adventist denomination? Our relevance will always depend on how we relate to the SDA denomination, our message will always be aimed exclusively at it, because the 16 million Seventh-day Adventists are the only people on this planet who accept the authority of Ellen White. In other words, we will never have a global message.

Has God given us a message to take Ellen White to the world? Does God's plan for the world in this time involve the purchasing of all the "little red books," and the obtaining of an intimate knowledge of every book, periodical, letter, manuscript etc. ever written by Ellen White? Must we all undertake to become Ellen White experts before we

are qualified to understand God's present will for our lives and the world? And must we also impose the same necessity upon all to whom we witness before we can get them to understand God's purposes for them? This is what some of our brethren apparently believe and they will, in all seriousness deliberately reject the straight testimony of the Bible in deference to statements credited to Ellen White.

The majority of the objections to our present emphasis on the baptism of the holy spirit have been on the basis of what people perceive Ellen White to be saying. It seems that every issue which we encounter in Adventism always eventually polarizes around what Ellen White has said. I find this very strange, especially when Ellen White herself said:

*We then took the position that the Bible, and the Bible only, was to be our guide; and **we are never to depart from this position.** -- Letter 105, 1903. {CW 145.3}*

But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines, and the basis of all reforms{GC88 595.1}

It is a sad fact that many of us claim to live by this principle, but in actual fact, we depend far more on Sister White than we do on the Bible. How else can we explain the fact that we quote Ellen White in seeking to establish that:

- a. God does not heal people today except by natural means.
- b. We are not to expect the pouring out of the holy spirit until a Sunday law is passed.
- c. We are not to pray for the sick unless we have first questioned them closely about their habits of eating and living.

The conclusion is that anybody who claims to have been baptized by the holy spirit and who performs healing

by any means other than natural methods, must be influenced by the spirit of Satan. What shall we do in the face of such unscriptural objections? The tragic fact is that such "evidence" carries far more weight with some of us than the simple straight truth of the Bible! If Ellen White is a true messenger of God, then her writings, when properly understood, can never contradict the Bible, and if it should ever happen that they are found to contradict it, then at that point it is plain that they are not to be accepted.

Yet, even if our main dependence is the writings of Ellen White, God has still not left us without witness. One hundred and twenty-two years ago Ellen White declared that the time had already arrived for the great outpouring of the holy spirit, and that in fact it had already begun!!

. . . the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the rev-

elation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. {RH, November 22, 1892 par. 7}

How is it that today, 122 years further on, we are still being told that it is not yet time for God to pour out His spirit on His people (even by those who depend on Ellen White for their doctrines)? In addition, Ellen White outlines what will be the result of this outpouring of the spirit.

Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand. {GC88 612.1}

Notice, the fact that Satan also works

with "lying wonders" will not prevent God from working miracles.

So thank God, here Ellen White is in perfect agreement with the Bible as we would expect. God help us that in our search for truth we may always give the Bible its rightful place. As Ellen White said,

But don't you quote Sister White. I don't want you ever to quote Sister White until you get your vantage ground where you know where you are. Quote the Bible. Talk the Bible. It is full of meat, full of fatness. Carry it right out in your life, and you will know more Bible than you know now. {SpM 174.1}



Open Face

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