



# Open Face

## THE REALITY OF THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

David Clayton



*“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” (Revelation 12:7-10)*

I have always found this to be one of the fascinating passages in the Bible, perhaps because it brings so many questions to mind. For example, what kind of war was there in heaven? What were the weapons which they used? Michael fought and His angels fought. The question is, could Satan resist the power of Michael, the Son of God for

even one moment? What about God Himself? Why didn't He also fight? How could the devil dare to think that he could, by force of conflict gain control of heaven? God has the power to wipe out Satan in an instant if He so chooses, but the Bible says there was war. There was a battle and Satan was cast out. Immediately this tells us that there are issues involved in the conflict between God and Satan which are more than simply the issue of who is stronger.

Let us notice the name that Satan was called; he was called, “the accuser of our brethren.” The Bible says he was accusing them before God “day and night,” and when he was finally cast out of heaven, there was great rejoicing there.

What time are we considering here, when Satan was cast out? Is this talking about in the very beginning when Satan first sinned and lost his place in heaven? No, this was after Christ died and returned to heaven.

We know, because it says,

*“the accuser of our brethren which accused them before our God day and night.”*

Before this world was created Satan had nobody to accuse. It was after the world was created and man sinned that he went before God, night and day, accusing the people of God continually. When Jesus was resurrected and went back to heaven, he was finally and permanently cast out of heaven, and there was great rejoicing among the heavenly host because they no longer had to listen to his nagging, accusing

voice.

Let us consider something; Satan is called the accuser of our brethren. He apparently was in the habit of going before God, picking out every sin that God's people on earth were committing, and accusing them before God. If Satan had not believed that his accusations carried some weight, would he have wasted so much time? The truth is that his accusations had a point. Let us see just how strong Satan's accusations were.

### JOB

The story of Job is a good illustration of how Satan accuses God's people and seeks to destroy them.

*“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.” (Job 1:6)*

There are times in heaven when there are great assemblies, when all the inhabitants of the heavens gather together before God. What do they do at this time? Do they just sit down and look at Him? No, at times they assemble to worship and praise God, but at other times their purpose is to discuss and examine certain issues.

So on this occasion they gathered together before God, and Satan came to

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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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present himself among them. As they were having this discussion, God said to Satan: "What are you doing here and where are you coming from?"

Satan's answer was full of meaning. He said, "from roaming about on the earth, and from walking about on it!" Satan was really saying, "down on earth they serve me. You think that these people in heaven serve you because your way is good, but let me tell you, those who are really free are the people on earth and you know what? Every one of them is serving me! They have all chosen my way. They have all chosen the way that you call the way of sin and evil, and every one of them is serving me! Everyone of them is showing you that my way is better and more desirable. These angels in heaven have to serve You, and if they don't serve You, You will kick them out and destroy them, but down there on earth where they are really free they are serving me!"

So Satan accused God. The Bible doesn't give all the details, but when we look at the arguments we can see that that is what it was all about.

So the Lord answered Satan:

*"... hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" (Job 1:8)*

God was saying to Satan: "What you are saying is not true. There is still somebody on earth who willingly, of his own free will, is serving Me, and this man, Job, is saying to you, Satan, that my way is the better way."

Did God have a point? Did Satan have a point?

*"Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand..." (Job 1:9-12)*

Did God know whether Job really loved Him or not? Did Satan know whether Job really loved God or not? Of course he did! But Satan is a liar. He is a liar, and an accuser of the brethren. Satan knew in his heart that God's way is better. But he is a liar and he was trying to move God against Job. The question is, why did God have to prove anything to Satan anyway? Was it that God needed to be certain about Job? Was He in doubt? Was it for Satan's sake? Why would God have to prove anything to Satan? Satan could not be saved. At this point he was long past the point of no return. His probation had closed hundreds of years before Job's time. Who was God really proving something to? Obviously it must have been to the sons of God who were there from all the other planets, and to the angels. THEY don't know everything, as God knows everything. God had to demonstrate to

these unfallen beings that Job really had chosen His way out of love for God and an appreciation of what is just and true and right.. He had to show it and there was only one way that God could show it.

Terrible affliction came upon Job. In one day his ten children died. In one day everything he had was gone! Did God have to respond to Satan like that? We must understand that, it was more than just responding to Satan. There were great issues involved in Job's life and in what was happening to him. In actual fact, ***The whole universe was watching Job!***

Shortly afterwards on another occasion there was another great assembly in heaven. We read about it in Job chapter 2. As on the previous occasion, Satan presented himself.

*"And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause." (Job 2:3)*

"Without a cause?" Why was God afflicting Job, "***without a cause?***" God knew there was no cause; Satan knew there was no cause, and yet Satan was able to move God to act against Job - without a cause! On God's part there was no cause; on Satan's part there was no cause, because you see, Satan knew the truth. But there were some who did not know, and for their sakes God had to have this demonstration. Satan hoped to destroy Job, he hoped that he would be able to afflict and persecute Job and so torment him that he might get him to rebel against God and against God's way. He did know indeed that Job was serving God from right motives, but he hoped to turn Job from his loyalty to God by his severe afflictions.

This is the same way Satan will try to destroy the 144,000. He will say of the

144,000, “give them to me for a few moments and I will show you that these people do not really love you.” And it takes real confidence in His people for God to say, “do your best with them.” God does not say that of the common Christian. God says that only of somebody whom He knows can really be trusted.

## ABRAHAM

It is interesting as we read the story of Abraham in the book, ‘*Patriarchs and Prophets*’, for Ellen White makes the point that all of heaven was watching Abraham. When God promised Abraham that he would have a son and then delayed for so many years, Abraham lost faith and tried to fulfill God’s promise by human effort. He went in to Hagar and had a son by her. Ellen White makes the point that Satan accused Abraham of not being fit for God to use because he had no faith in God; he had done something that was based on lack of faith. This is why God had to put him to this greater test with Isaac. God brought him to the place where the whole universe could now see clearly whether or not this man loved and trusted God supremely. As Abraham was about to plunge the knife into his son’s bosom God said, ‘lay not thine hand upon the lad’. Then take note of the next words which He spoke: ‘NOW I KNOW THAT THOU FEAREST GOD’! Did not God know before? Of course God knew, but the beings for whom God was making this demonstration had not known. Now they could see for themselves. Now they could know.

## AHAB

Let us now examine this unseen conflict as it related to the soul of Ahab. Was Ahab a good person or an evil person? Ahab was an extremely wicked man. He was one of the wickedest kings in Israel, yet as we examine the history of this man, we see great mercy manifested towards him by God.

When Elijah confronted the false prophets on mount Carmel, four hun-

dred and fifty prophets of Baal, along with four hundred prophets of the groves, Ahab was there watching the conflict. He saw eight hundred and fifty false prophets on the mountain cutting themselves, dancing and leaping, calling upon the name of their false, impotent god for one whole day while there was no response, he saw God send fire from heaven when Elijah prayed, and witnessed the destruction of these false prophets by the brook Kishon. He witnessed with his own eyes the hand of God and proved that Jehovah is the one true God.

God did something special for Ahab that night? as best as I can figure from the map, it was approximately twenty miles from Mount Carmel to Jezreel and God put His Spirit upon Elijah, and made Elijah run in front of Ahab’s chariot for the full twenty miles back to Jezreel. The rain came down in such a furious torrent that it was impossible to even make out the roadway, so God made Elijah run ahead of the chariot to guide Ahab all the way back to Jezreel. God was manifesting the regard of a Father for wicked king Ahab. It is probable that in heaven, Satan was saying, “give me Ahab! He is one of mine. Let me have him that I may destroy him!” But God responded, “he has not had his fair chance yet.”

As we continue to trace the working of God in the life of Ahab, the next thing we come upon is an incident in the life of Ahab where Ben-Hadad, the king of Syria is seeking to make war with Ahab. And although Ahab does not want any trouble, the demands of the Syrian king are so unreasonable that he has no choice but to fight with him. We can read this story in 1 Kings 20. The wonderful thing is that two times God sent a prophet to direct Ahab how to defeat the Syrians. The second time it says that the Syrians filled the whole country, but the Israelites were camped before them like two little flocks of kids. God sent a prophet to tell AHAB (!) that he would defeat the Syrians, and as Ahab followed God’s instructions the enemy was totally defeated (1 Kings 20:26-30)

Again we can remember the time when Ahab and Jezebel killed Naboth because Ahab coveted his vineyard. God sent the prophet Elijah to tell him, “In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, there the dogs shall lick your blood also.” So what did Ahab do? He put on sackcloth and ashes and fasted, and went about softly. And the Lord said to Elijah,

*“Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.” (1 Kings 21:29).*

Ahab’s soul was trembling in the balance; his destiny was on the line, and God was working for Ahab, extending every mercy possible in an attempt to deliver him from the clutches of the enemy.

But finally, we come to the decisive moment. We find the story in 1 Kings chapter 22. Ahab, along with Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, came together to once more do battle with the Syrians. As they were laying their plans, Jehoshaphat said to Ahab, “before we undertake this venture, let us first of all inquire of the Lord.” So Ahab sent and called for his prophets.

Remember that twice before God had delivered him out of the hands of these same Syrians and given him significant victories over them. But who does Ahab send for now? Four hundred and fifty prophets of the groves! The margin of my Bible tells me that they were prophets of the groves, Jezebel’s hirelings! But didn’t Elijah kill them all on Mount Carmel? Now here were four hundred more! What does that tell us? In spite of what he had seen on mount Carmel and God’s subsequent mercy towards him, Ahab had gone and replaced the false prophets whom God had destroyed! Was there any good in this man’s heart towards Jehovah? Ahab was saying to Jehovah, “I have no respect for You, no matter what You do for me!”

So those false prophets said, “go forward. You shall triumph in the battle today.” But Jehoshaphat was uneasy. He did not like the looks of these prophets. He said, “isn’t there a prophet of Jehovah here of whom we may inquire?” Ahab answered, “yes, there is one man, Micaiah, the son of Imlah, but I don’t like him because he never says anything good about me.” Jehoshaphat replied, “let not the king say so.” So they sent for Micaiah.

When Micaiah came, he said, “I saw all Israel scattered like sheep upon the mountains, and the Lord said, these have no master. Let each return to his house.” Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “didn’t I tell you that he wouldn’t speak good about me?” But Micaiah continued,

*“...hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.” (1 Kings 22:19-22)*

At that point the dividing line for Ahab had been crossed. In heaven now, there was no longer any discussion about how to save Ahab’s soul; the discussion now concerned how he should perish! Notice how it happens. God gathers the host of heaven together. They are gathered together and they begin to discuss it. One says one thing and one says another, and they discuss the matter. God asks the question and everybody gives his opinion, and finally, here comes an agent of Satan, a fallen angel (remember that in those days they still had access to heaven to

go back and forth), who says, “I will go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets.” If Ahab had retained any connection with God could that lying spirit have gone there to deceive him? No! But when you pass a certain line, when you set your mind in a certain direction, then God has no choice but to give Satan permission to do what he wants, and that’s what happened in this case. It happened with Saul, it happens with Ahab now. God says, “Go, you have my permission to work your way with him.” That’s what Satan had tried to do with Job, but it didn’t work because you see, Job had not placed himself on the side of Satan. Satan was not permitted to destroy him, though he did afflict him grievously. But now, in the case of Ahab, God says, “you may have your way with him.” And that is what happened. Ahab died in the battle that day, a lost man, firmly settled on the side of Satan, his destiny forever sealed, awaiting the day of judgment.

### SIMON PETER

Again we see this conflict being played out in the case of Simon Peter.

*“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not ....” (Luke 22:31,32)*

Let us look at that picture. Let us think of what it means. Satan came before God and said, “God, you have a man down there named Simon Peter walking around with your Son Jesus. Do you think that man is fit to be saved? Listen, that man is no better than me! If you save him then you will have to save me too!” He accused Peter like he accuses us in most intemperate terms, “God, do you think this man cares for you? Give him to me for a moment and I will show you what he is really like!” Does God know the answer? Of course He does! But the angelic beings do not know the answer, and that is always why things have to be done openly, publicly when God

contends with Satan for the souls of men.

But here is something to consider: The Son of God, Jesus, has the same mind as the Father, he has the same attitude towards us, yet He says, “I have prayed for you.” Jesus went down on His knees and said to His Father in heaven, “My Father, Satan is seeking to destroy Peter. Father, I am asking You to give him special help so that his faith may not fail.” Why does He need to pray like that when He and the Father have the same attitude towards Peter? Why does He need to talk to the Father? You might ask the same question, “how does He intercede for you and me today?” This is a picture that God is giving us to show us how Christ intercedes for us today. He literally speaks up on our behalf, When Satan literally says, “give me this one”

Think of the things which we have done today. Think of the deeds we have done, the thoughts we have been thinking, the words we have spoken, the little subtle glances we have cast at others which nobody might have noticed, but which the angels noticed and recorded and which Satan has undoubtedly seen. He says to God, “Do You think he is a Christian? Look at the things he did this morning. Are You going to save him? Then You had better save me! God, this one is mine for certain. He is not fit to be called one of Yours!” But Jesus prays. He steps into the breach.

Jesus said to Peter, “I have prayed for you so that your faith may not fail,” and so when he prayed, Peter received special help from God.

### WHY JESUS INTERCEDES PUBLICLY

Something interesting happened in John chapter 11. It is something which took place as He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead. Before he called Lazarus back to life, Jesus paused to pray, thanking His Father for hearing Him. But at the end of the prayer He added something which is

very enlightening. He said,

*And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 11:42)*

Why was He bothering to make a big thing of it since God always heard Him? It was for the sake of those who were standing by. Not for Jesus' sake, not for God's sake and not even for Lazarus' sake. It was for the sake of those who were standing there who could not understand nor discern the complete and perfect union between the heart of Jesus and the heart of God. Do you see a principle revealed here? Can we see from this the reason why Christ prays to the Father for us?

Do I need to ask you anything if you already know what is in my mind? The only reason why I may then need to speak to you is because there are others around who cannot read our minds and I want them to understand what is happening in our minds, so I speak to you for their benefit. That's what Jesus said He was doing. In heaven, the same situation prevails. The only persons in heaven who know everything, are God and His son Jesus. What about the angels? They are constantly studying the plan of salvation (1 Peter 1:12).

The heavenly beings are intensely interested in the things which we do down here on earth, and all our actions are the subject of their examination and careful scrutiny. Do you remember what Jesus said? He said there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance (Luke 15:7,10). At one time I used to think of that as just being a figurative way of speaking. But let us picture the following scene in our minds:

Here is a person who today, finally falls on his knees and says, "Lord, I am sorry for my sins. O Lord, I want you to give me a new beginning and a new life. I truly do give myself to you now Lord, to be yours to do with as you will, now and always." With a thrill of joy his

guardian angel carries the news back to heaven. As soon as he enters the great assembly hall he shouts out the tidings, "Listen! listen! I have wonderful news! David has made up his mind today to serve our Lord and King!" Then what happens? All the angels leave their business for a little while. There is laughter and singing and rejoicing as they all join in the celebration. All join in. There is no one who is not concerned. Every single angel in heaven begins to rejoice. Does that really happen, or is that just a figurative way of speaking? The truth is that if we don't have an idea of what heaven is like and of what is really happening there, we can never lay hold by faith on the work which is being done for us there.

### CHRIST'S MINISTRATION IN THE SANCTUARY

In the Old Testament Sanctuary ritual, Christ tried to teach the principle, by the work of the priests, that there is a real work being carried out for His people in heaven in the sanctuary there. All year long, as the people brought their sacrifices and confessed their sins on these animals the sanctuary became symbolically polluted with the sins of the congregation. This, of course, was symbolic of the fact that it is through the death of Christ that the converted sinner is privileged to have his sins dealt with in the heavenly sanctuary.

The blood taken into the sanctuary represents the fact that there is now an acceptable offering made to God, in heaven, on our behalf. An offering that satisfies all the claims of justice which demand our death and separation from God because of the sins which we have committed. The law says, we must die. Why? Because we have broken it and are sinners. But Jesus says, "I paid the price for them. My blood was shed for them. Father, receive them as your own children as they come to you in my name." Jesus now offers His own blood in the heavenly sanctuary (Hebrews 8:3), speaking up on our behalf, claiming for us the gifts and blessings of

God.

As the blood of Christ is applied on my behalf in heaven, the Holy Spirit becomes available to me; the graces administered through prayer, represented by the altar of incense, become available to me; the word of God, understanding, strength from that word, represented by the shewbread, become available to me. But how do these things become available to me? It is through the blood of Christ. The blood taken into the Sanctuary.

What is the real meaning of the blood being sprinkled in heaven? What in a practical sense is the meaning of the offering of the blood of Christ on my behalf? I cannot come to grips with the concept of Christ just sitting down on a throne doing nothing, or repeating the same thing over and over all day, "Father, my blood, my blood!" What is He doing really? Is heaven a real, practical place, or does nothing happen there? The passages we have been looking at show us clearly that Jesus actually, literally, speaks up on our behalf! That He actually presents evidence and facts and reasons in the presence of the assembled hosts of heaven, on our behalf.

In Volume 7 of the Bible Commentary on page 931, Ellen white says,

*"Christ is watching. He knows all about our burdens, our dangers, and our difficulties; and He fills His mouth with arguments in our behalf. He fits His intercessions to the needs of each soul, as He did in the case of Peter .... Our Advocate fills His mouth with arguments to teach His tried, tempted ones to brace against Satan's temptations. He interprets every movement of the enemy. He orders events." (7BC, p.931)*

Let us consider the meaning of this phrase: "He fills his mouth with arguments on our behalf." We have already seen that in heaven there are from time to time, vast assemblies. But as those heavenly beings gather together for

these meetings, what do they do? One of the important things which they do, is examine the lives of individuals down here on earth. We saw this in the cases of Job, Ahab and even Peter. They look at the lives of people. They are examining your life and my life. Now, as my life is examined, every deed which I have committed is weighed in the balance. As these heavenly intelligences look at our lives, do they have discussions? I think they do. They talk about our deeds. They say, "look at David. Here are the things which he did today. Do these deeds demonstrate that he really loves our Lord?" Satan is involved in the issue as well, for he still seeks every opportunity to accuse the children of God, to point out their failings, and to claim them as his own.

But what does Jesus do? As far as the guilt of sin is concerned, Satan no longer has a convincing argument, for the blood of Jesus has taken care of sin. He says, "look. I have done it for them. I died for their sins." And heaven does not need to be reminded of that. They know that already, but you know what is the real question? The real question is, **Have I accepted it?** Have I accepted what Christ did for me? How can they in heaven know for certain that I have accepted what Christ did? How can they know? The only way is through my life and my behaviour!

### Showing Our Loyalty

When this thought came home to me, I was ashamed. I thought of the angel going back to heaven with a record of my day's activities, and wondered what kind of report he would carry. What kind of reaction would there be in heaven tonight, when they receive the report of my actions today? It's one thing to say, "all of us are being examined." Oh we can hide under that! If I say WE are all sinful, I may receive some consolation in the fact that I have company. I am not the only one, it's all of us! But when I know that the name "David Clayton" is being called in heaven as Job's name was called,

and Satan is saying, "look at him! Look at this man!" And when I know that the angels are looking into my life, (because they have things to learn too) and when I know that Jesus is trying to find a way to swing the balances in my behalf, I wonder how many reasons have I given Jesus to rejoice today, on my behalf. When I think of this, I am anxious that the angels should know that I love the Lord. I want them to know that I am on His side, that I do not in any way desire the ways of Satan and of sin. I don't want Satan to have the slightest grounds on which to accuse me before the Lord, to reproach His name, and to gain a foothold in my life.

This has also encouraged me to pray aloud. I want them to hear, I want Satan to know where my loyalty is. When I commit a sin, I want them to know quickly that I am sorry. When we commit a sin, it is there on the records. They look at the records and they say, "look, see what he has been doing. He has shown no regret for these actions, he has not repented of them. This shows that his loyalty is with Satan. He is still clinging to these things. He is not sorry for them!" They don't know our hearts! They can only see our loyalty from the way we behave and from the things which we say in prayer.

So I can see that repentance for sin is very important. We need to make it plain to these heavenly beings that we regret the wrong we do. We need to make them know that we hate sin and want to put it away, so that they can see that we are on Jehovah's side. We might fall at times (heaven forbid), but we might fall and do the deeds of Satan. Let them know that it is an accident; let them know that this is not the way our heart is. Let them know, because they are examining our lives, and this investigation is going on all the time. Satan is asking for us that he might sift us like wheat, but Jesus is there interceding.

One morning I went to pray. Nowadays, I usually go into the car to pray. The mornings are sometimes cold and

it is the warmest place that I can find outside of the house. As I got up to pray this particular morning, the spring was not in my step as usual. I had to fight to get to the bathroom to wash my face and to get myself awake. It was only the knowledge that the Lord was waiting and that the angels were watching, and wanting to see if my love for God was real, which gave me a little spur. As I came to the car, I was thinking, "boy, they must be thinking that your love is really dying, because one time you used to go out into the bushes to pray, but now you have gone into a more comfortable place and still you find it so hard to get up." As I was thinking about it, do you know what thought came to my mind?

"It's a good thing that you have somebody who knows what humanity is, to represent you. One who can be touched with the feelings of your infirmities." Because, the angels cannot fully understand what it is like when you are not feeling as strong, and you're getting a little older and you don't have the drive like when you were younger. But, you see, Jesus is my flesh and blood! He understands, He is touched with the feelings of my infirmities, and when the angels are thinking, "David doesn't love the Father as much anymore. His appreciation of God is growing less," then Jesus can explain, because He knows what it is to be a human being. That is why one like me is before the throne of God to intercede on my behalf.

We know that the Father understands, but you see, the issue does not concern God, and Jesus only, the issue also involves the unfallen beings. Everything God does has to be demonstrated before them, they have to see the justice of it. If it was God only who needed to settle the issue, then how long would Satan's rebellion have lasted? From the moment he rebelled, God knew everything that would happen, God knew He was fit to die, but still God let him live. Why? It was because God is not dealing with Himself alone. All that He does must be clearly demonstrated to be fair and just

before the whole watching universe.

### Another Glimpse

Let us look at another place in the Bible where we get another glimpse of this ministration: We are told that Jesus had to GO to heaven, before the Holy Spirit could be poured out. He says in John chapter 16:7,

*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (John 16:7)*

Why did Jesus have to go back to heaven?" Could He not have asked God for the gift while He was on earth, just as well as when He was in heaven? Could not God hear Him just as well from here as from there?

The fact is that He had to go back to heaven to the heavenly sanctuary, to minister in the Holy Place. There He sprinkled His blood before the Father, meaning that He presented strong arguments on the basis of the sacrifice He had made. He said, "Father, everything that you have for them, I ask on their behalf. I have paid the price with my own life. It is right for you to give them Father, for I paid the price." And He made His request in the presence of the whole watching universe.

On the morning of the resurrection Mary Magdalene came to Him and fell at His feet with the cry, "Rabboni! Master!" And Jesus said, "don't touch Me." Why? "I have not yet ascended to my Father. I'm on the way to heaven, but don't delay me." He had to go back to heaven for some reason, and yet, God and Christ have one mind. He is in heaven, Jesus on earth, but surely they are thinking the same kinds of thoughts, they each know what is in the other's mind. Why does He have to go back to heaven immediately? Why is it so important that he should APPEAR in His presence? He had to appear before His Father, and in the presence of the assembled host. He had to receive the assurance, PUBLICLY,

that His sacrifice had been accepted.

### Grounds for Accusation?

Now the question might perhaps be asked: Does Satan still have grounds on which to accuse the people of God? Didn't Jesus remove all grounds on which he could accuse the people of God when He paid the price for every single sin committed by the human race? Does Satan still accuse God's people on this side of Calvary?

Jude 9 tells us that when Michael the Archangel contended with the devil about the body of Moses, He dared not bring against him a railing accusation. Of course, we know that Satan was not interested in the flesh-and-blood body of Moses. This contention was for the soul of Moses. You see, Jesus had come to raise Moses back to life and take him to heaven, so Satan came to oppose him and said, "Look here, you cannot raise this man back to life. You cannot give him eternal life. This man died having sins against his record. He is mine!" The Bible says that Jesus could not bring against him a railing accusation. He could not say to Satan, "My blood paid the price, so you back off Satan." He was not yet crucified, so He could not say it. His only way of opposing the devil's claims was to say, "the Lord rebuke you O Satan."

The same thing happened in Zechariah chapter 3, when Joshua the high priest was seen standing before the Lord with Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. The Lord turned to Satan and said, "Jehovah rebuke you Satan." Again, he could not yet say, "my blood paid the price for him."

But in Revelation when it talks about the dragon being cast out of heaven, it says that God's people overcame him **by the blood of the Lamb**. The blood is shed; we have that to claim; Christ has that to argue on our behalf. Satan cannot now claim that we have no right to salvation, but he has other grounds on which to accuse us, and that is what I really want to point out. The question now is, are you really a Christian? Have you really accepted Christ?

That's the question! The question is not whether or not God has a right to save man. That issue is done with and settled. Anybody who truly accepts Christ has victory over Satan. The blood of Christ has paid the price and made all things possible for us. We Christians shall never die. But the question is, are you really a Christian? That's the question and this is where Satan finds grounds to accuse the people of God. How often does he find reasons to say, "Is this a Christian? This?!! Look at what he just did a while ago...."

### THE IMPLICATIONS OF SIN

The Bible says whosoever is born of God does not commit sin. (1 John 3:9) He that committeth sin is of the devil. This is how we know the children of the devil: By the fact that they commit sin! Can we say that Satan does not have grounds on which to accuse God's professed people?

And when my life is examined in heaven, what a terrible thought that the sins which I committed today, will become the public knowledge of all the heavenly host! And all the things I do today will demonstrate whether I love God, or whether I prefer Satan's way. Whether I really am God's representative; will determine whether or not Jesus will be able to hold up His head at the mention of my name. Because, Christ died for my sins, yes! That is His part, and He paid the price, thank God for that. But what about me, what about my response, what have I done for Christ? What am I showing to the universe about Christ?

Are our lives saying, "I think Satan's way is better than yours, Jesus, and actually, I prefer that really! You died for me and you paid the price and you gave me the Holy Spirit and everything that I need, but I am still going to give myself to Satan now and then, because his way is really more pleasing." That's what our actions say, and Satan must triumph over God with the words, "You say your way is better. See the people whom you say you have saved. Look

and see who they are serving!” And I am sure that he flaunts our behaviour in the face of our Saviour and in the face of our Father.

There is a secret place where God and I may meet. There is a level of communication between us that not even the angels may enter into. But you see, there is also a public place, where, before God can intervene in our lives to act on our behalf, it must be clearly seen that we have chosen to place ourselves on God’s side of the controversy. This is why it is so vital that we make it absolutely plain by the way we behave and also by repenting of our sins and asking God’s forgiveness, that we do not belong to Satan. The whole story of Job, and how he was assaulted by Satan, shows you that there are other characters involved. It’s not just a matter of, I ask God, and if God feels like it, He will answer. It is very clear that, first of all, it must be demonstrated to the unfallen sons of God, that we are on God’s side, that we have chosen His way, before He can intervene in our lives. Because if I commit sin, then I show that I prefer the way of the devil.

If we demonstrate by our actions that we are on Satan’s side, if we commit sin, and then come to make a request of Him while our idle jesting and irritable temper show that we really enjoy Satan’s way, do we expect God to be justified before heaven in answering our prayer?

Jesus said, “if two or three of you shall agree on anything which you desire, it shall be done for you of my Father.” Why is it that two or three are more effective than one? Isn’t God just as willing to listen to one as to two? Doesn’t God care for us as individuals, or is it only as we come to Him in groups? The truth is that in some cases, there are stumbling blocks in the lives of some Christians. It may be that some do not clearly demonstrate that their loyalty is with God, and therefore, there are blockages in the lives of those persons which make it impossible for God to act. When Christians unite in

praying for a cause, then it is far more likely that in that group there will be some whose loyalty may be clearly seen, thus enabling God to act in answering their prayers.

### God’s Pain

Finally, let us examine a quotation from the book, “Education,” on page 263.

*“Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering sin has caused our Creator...” (Ed. 263)*

Well, I want to hasten the work because I want to go to heaven. I want to reach people with the gospel because, people are being lost!.... What about because God is suffering? What about that? And we think, “suffering? How could God really be suffering? Can God feel pain? Isn’t God, omnipotent? Surely, God doesn’t really feel pain! He is too great and untouchable to really be deeply concerned about these things.”

But God does feel pain. He is deeply hurt by our unfaithfulness. Ezekiel 16 gives us a view of the way God sees our unfaithfulness and shows us that His pain may be compared to the pain felt by a man whose wife is unfaithful to him. I have never known what it is to have my wife be unfaithful to me. I don’t expect that I will ever have the experience. But the very thought is painful. I can feel, just by thinking about it, a little of the hurt that a man must feel whose wife gives herself to another man. This is the kind of pain which God says that He feels, when we choose the way of Satan. God is greater than we are, yes. But consider this: Inasmuch as God is greater than we are, so are His feelings deeper, more sensitive than ours, and so is His pain much deeper than ours could ever be.

Yes, we may not see the tears of God. On His throne in heaven, the tears of

God may not be visible, but Jesus came to earth to show us what God is really like, and here, when He was in human form, Jesus wept more than once because of the sorrow caused Him by the sinfulness of His people. How He wept over Jerusalem when they rejected Him! Does God feel pain still? He does!

It says here:

*“... All heaven suffered in Christ’s agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God.” (Ed. 263)*

So the cross is not just the place where God’s Son died, but it also reveals to us the suffering of God. Can we fathom that? We think of Jesus dying on that cross and crying, “My God, why have You forsaken Me?” We think of the physical pain, but as we stop to think of the mental and spiritual agony He went through, we understand, the cross is just a revelation, (given to us because our senses are dull), of what sin has been doing to God.

Today, we have caused Him to suffer in just the same way. We have caused pain and shame to our Father and to our Lord. You know what kind of pain? It’s the kind of pain I would feel if my son, were to become a criminal. It’s the kind of pain I would feel if my son were to start using cocaine. Or if he were to go mad and start eating from the garbage and walk around naked. That’s the kind of pain God is feeling. How painful to think that even though we say we are redeemed, yet we still partake of sin. We still give the enemy grounds to bring an accusation against God.

*“... Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him. (Ed. 263)”*

There is a text in Zechariah which is relevant in connection with this. It is



found in Zechariah 12:10.

*“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”*

Have you ever read this text and wondered about it? I hope that today it will be permanently fixed in your mind. It says that the Lord will pour out upon His people the spirit of grace and supplications. Right now, today, that spirit is not upon us. I dare say God wants us to have it, but we don't have that spirit of grieving for God's pain. And what

does he say we are going to do when He pours that spirit upon us? What shall we do? “You shall look upon Me whom YOU have pierced.” Let me tell you, it was not cruel Roman hands that nailed Christ to the cross. It was not blasphemous Jewish leaders who sentenced Him to death. It was your sins and my sins. And day by day, by our indulgence in sin we continue to crucify the son of God and to hurt Him and to pain his heart.

Words cannot express this thing, but it is true! My words cannot express this truth, my heart does not feel about this the way it should, but I hope that your heart is touched and that you are feeling about this, the way God wants you to feel. The Lord says, when this comes before you in the way that it should, you will look upon the one whom *you*

have pierced and you will mourn for HIM! Oh yes, we mourn about our sins; We weep over our relatives who are not yet saved and who are enslaved by sin, and so we should. But have we mourned for the Lord? For what we are doing to Him? The Lord says when we see things from the right perspective, we will mourn for the one that we have pierced. Let me tell you, that this is the way that we are going to finally overcome sin. When we love the Lord best of all and He is more important than any other person and we look at Him and understand what we are doing to Him, then we will MOURN for Him. Let us never forget what the Lord goes through each time that we commit sin.



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## A sampling of our mail

The gospel has never been so sweet. Never in my study life have I found such joy and never has the BIBLE made such sense until now with the study of the godhead.

I have finally managed to log on to your website. I was able to open a few of the articles there but some could not be opened. It was giving error messages as if someone was servicing it or otherwise, It was unfortunate that I only managed to print maybe a quarter of the articles on “the Godhead/Trinity.”

I would appreciate it if I and in turn we (my study-group friends) receive some materials on this “WONDERFUL SUBJECT.” Maybe I should tell you that back at the turn of this century we were studying Hebrews and encountered problems indentifying who Jesus really was. Coming from the dogmatic background of the Trinity it was so very difficult to understand the very nature of Jesus as written in chapter 1. For instance, what name did He inherit? Now it makes perfect sense.

I might not be able to say it in a way that expresses my sincerity, but the truth is that I'm thrilled to be in communion with your ministry and my prayer is that the LORD bless you richly and that we who have caught the fire

be sanctified and purified by it.

Please, BLESS us with materials (anything and everything that the Lord enables you to), DO send us.

*Harare, Zimbabwe*

Please send me 5 copies of *The Mystery Demystified*. I am sending a donation in the mail for these books.

Just last week, I was forced to resign as the Youth Sabbath School teacher at our church for not believing in the doctrine of the trinity. I have never made that issue a topic of discussion in my class nor have I ever used my position as the teacher to try to push my beliefs on my students. The 27 Fundamental Beliefs seems to hold more weight than the Bible.

Our pastor has twice preached from the pulpit that we have 2 mediators; Christ and the Holy Spirit. It seems the pastor can say whatever he wants and not get into trouble.

One of our members, who was leading the service, actually addressed his prayer to the Holy Spirit instead of to the Father. Nobody blinks an eye when these heresies are taught from the pulpit, but when some people dare to speak up and say that it is un-biblical, they are treated as heretics.

*USA*

Just want to thank you for your ministry. I have been richly blessed by your fearless and insightful presentation of present truth. I am a third generation Seventh-Day Adventist. In fact, I attended West Indies College Primary School in Mandeville as a child of 9 back in 1970 while my parents taught at the college.

However, my life has been turbulent and fraught with spiritual chaos and contradictions. In a fit of frustration at age 16, while I was canvassing in Ontario and Quebec, I even had a brief span where I tossed the books and began to study Jehovah Witness doctrine. Fortunately, the Lord rescued me from that a week later.

Sometime this year I came to a crossroad in the my life. One day after considering my sins, failed marriage, and many wasted years of playing christian, I knelt down and repented from all my sins, and since have been walking with the Lord. In the past, I have slept through alarm clocks and even fire alarms, but now the Lord wakes me up at 4:30 every morning to walk and worship Him. I read the Spirit of Prophecy daily and am memorizing whole chapters of the Bible with perfect recall.

However, currently I have developed an insatiable thirst for present truth. I have hungrily devoured all of your sermons regarding the Trinity doctrine and other sermons as archived on your website.

How can I get further tapes from you? Is there a catalog of tapes that I may order? Please let me know, as the churches here in Mt. Dora, Florida are leaving me with a very uncomfortable feeling. In fact, one of the ministers of the main church here has even started supporting a new church for the community that meets on Sundays. He ignores doctrine and preaches a message heavily centered on prosperity and faith prayers, and bristles with the mere mention of the Spirit of Prophecy.

Please excuse the lengthiness of this e-mail, but I would appreciate hearing back from you, and of course for your prayers as well. May God continue to richly bless you, your family, and your ministry.

*Florida*

Hello. I would like to know how I could receive a copy of your newsletter. Thank you.

*Philippines*

There is such a lot happening in this world right now isn't there. Praise God that he has shown us His truths, we have a Saviour to cling to in these times. Oh, the pity for people who have no such Rock. To know that this is not the way the world will be for much longer, Praise God.

*Australia*

I am a "new" believer in the sense that I have just seen the reality of what the organized Seventh-day Adventist church has become. I am a third generation SDA, formerly a hospital administrator and still presently denominationally employed. I grew up with the writings of Morris Venden, Jack Sequeira, George Knight and the rest of the "new theology" teachers of the church. About 3 weeks ago I discovered the flaw in what I was being taught when I came upon the website of a friend's father. I have been reassessing my personal theology since and am actively looking and searching for information on the "real unadulterated" truth. I saw your website via "Google".

Is there a way I can receive your

Open Face newsletter here in the Philippines? Do you know of similar minded people here in the Philippines?

Thank you and the Lord bless you in your ministry.

*Philippines*

I wish you well in rejecting the Trinity. I feel that perhaps the tide is turning on this false doctrine.

*A Mormon (!) USA*

I would like to know about James White's views regarding Christ and when he gave up his arian views concerning Christ. I am SDA but I have a Catholic friend who says the reason James White did not accept the doctrine of the trinity was because of his arian views. It has been my understanding that Mary as the Mediatrix figured into the doctrine of the Trinity and that is why Adventists did not expound it.

My Catholic friend tells me the church (SDA Church) accepted the doctrine of the Trinity in 1930. I have heard Adventists talk about The Trinity but they do not seem to realize there is a difference between believing in the Godhead and believing in the Trinity. The Catholics do not see the Trinity as we do. We think we are just talking about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but they include Mary (she usurps Christ's position).

Would someone who knows the church history be willing to communicate with me? My personal email address is [erinarts@hotmail.com](mailto:erinarts@hotmail.com)  
Thanks,

*Erin Carey*

Please would you send me the tapes you offered "the Omega of Deadly Heresies," the things which are revealed, the spirit of anti-christ, God on trial, the Measure of God's love. I appreciate this very much.

Would you please tell me where I can find an article that deals with the difference between the trinity as taught by the Catholic church and the trinity as taught by the SDA church? Also, would you please tell me where I can find an article dealing with the confusing "3 persons in the heavenly trio" type quotes written by Ellen White. Were these quotes published posthumously?

I am finding that these "three" type statements difficult, especially when trying to share with others about the

evils of the trinity doctrine.

Thank you very much for your material on your website. What I have found so far has been a huge blessing. May God continue to bless your ministry

*Australia*

I have begun reading your leading article in the last edition of Old Paths, and you mentioned that there was a time when everyone in the universe knew of God's love and mercy. I know you meant well, but at that time no one in the universe knew anything at all about God's mercy, because there was nothing to call forth this attribute of God's character until sin entered the universe.

We are so aware of it now, that we just automatically think it was always manifested, even when there was no need of it, but not so. This was one aspect of character that was known only to God and His Son, until the need arose for its revelation to the universe. This was a new revelation of God even to the angels.

With brotherly love in Jesus,

*Alabama USA*

I would like to have all 48 Cassette Tapes. Please write me (and say), how much the production will cost.

Thank you, God bless you,

*Germany*

Thank you for sending the latest issue of Open Face. I just loaned your video, "The Spirit of Antichrist" to a fellow church member who has decided to take up the issue of the trinity and study it for himself. There has been a great uproar in our church over this and he wants to "settle it once and for all". I pray he will come the true Biblical conclusion about God but I don't think it will settle the issue for anyone else in the church.

*USA*

I must admit, that I have been having some difficulty with the Trinity messages. My thinking has been so molded during the course of my life, that it is really hard thinking of the Godhead in the true perspective. I have made at least four attempts to get various people to listen to the tapes on this subject. However, I have been met with silence, stony rejection, and denials.

Hopefully, I will find at least one per-

son who will pay attention to this message. What does puzzle me, however, are some of the seemingly contradictory statements by E.G. White, such as "the Holy Spirit is a person who walks among us", and others.

Well, once again, I would appreciate any light on these matters. Also, would you please include me in your mailing list for your newsletter, and a catalog pertaining to other tapes which I may order. Thank you very much and God bless.

*Florida*

I would like to sign up for your Open Face. Thank you, and God bless you always.

*Kentucky, USA*

I am trying to express to people within the Adventist church today that the trinity was not taught or believed by our pioneers or Ellen White. I have used statements from all the pioneers - including Ellen White. How ever they still insist on something similar to what J S washburn had written. They do not argue (with the fact) that he or the other pioneers were anti-trinitarian but they insist that Ellen White definitely was not. Any info on this would be appreciated. Also (say) if you are Seventh-day Adventist or not as they claim that sites

such as [www.smyrna.org](http://www.smyrna.org) are not Adventist at all. Granted they do not have the name Adventist in their church but their beliefs are definitely Adventist.

*USA*

I find your web page enlightening! I am not an SDA, but have a brother-in-law who is. The major disagreement we have in doctrine is his belief in the Trinity. Now I find that his early church beliefs did not include trinity. I am Church of God 7<sup>th</sup> day, and knew our churches had roots in the same movement, but didn't know this was not an early wedge. Our Church is moving toward Trinitarianism, and I don't understand it. I appreciate what you are preaching.

*USA*

Wow! And I thought I was the only person in the world who found the truth! Way to Go....Keep preaching the truth Brother! Please pray for me as well...as I am facing much persecution because of my stand for Christ and His God!

*Texas, USA*

Christian greetings to you all. I always read your Open Face newsletter when I visit my grandparents in Kingston. I find them very interesting and I would

love to read more and to know what your ministry is doing worldwide. People are in need of the knowledge of these words. May God continue blessing your ministry.

*Kingston, Jamaica*

When I think of all the ways God has blessed me, I am thankful for the blessings I have received listening to your tapes, and watching your videos.

Recently Sister Ann at Smyrna sent me your recent video, "The Roots of The Trinity." As always the message was presented in a clear and understanding way. God has definitely given you the gift of teaching. God is so good. I am thankful that He has blessed so many people through your ministry.

I remember you and your ministry in my prayers. Please pray for me and my family. May we all vindicate God's character in the way we live so the world can see how wonderful He is and the love He has for each of us in giving His Son.

*North Carolina, USA*

The "Roots of The Trinity," video is clear and informative, like all your presentations. I wish everyone could receive its message.

*Kansas, USA*



## Convention 2002 Report

On Sabbath, November 30, believers from several different parts of the island of Jamaica assembled in Albion, Manchester. The occasion was a convention of all who believe in the truth about God. There were believers from Kingston, St. James, Clarendon, Westmoreland, St. Elizabeth, Trelawny, St. Catherine and of course, from Manchester where the Convention was held.

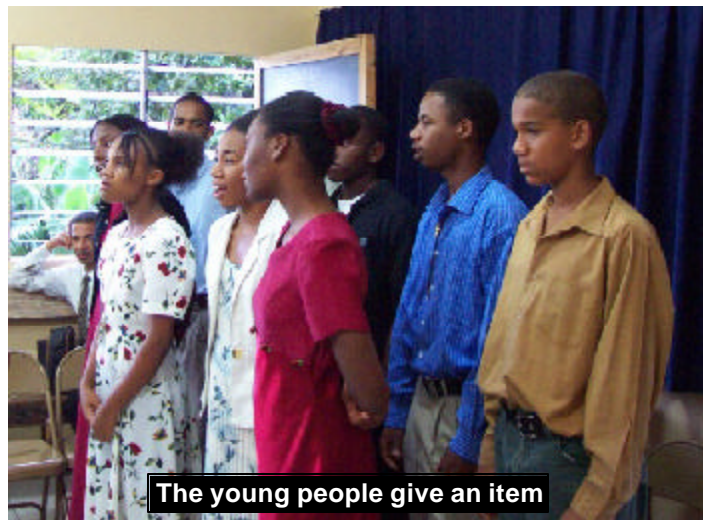
The day was filled with encouragement for the believers and at the end of it, all were persuaded that the Lord is indeed blessing people on all sides with a knowledge of His truth for these last days. We were drawn closer to the Lord, more motivated to do His work and also drawn closer to each other.

One special highlight of the day was the musical items which were provided by the young people's singing group, trained by brother Ayon Baxter. All were delighted by the lovely harmony of the music but were also blessed by the messages in the words of the songs themselves. Especially delightful was a rendition of "The Great Physician Now is Near," by brother Ayon Baxter and sister Kaydeen Wright.

The morning message was given by brother David Clayton who spoke on the topic, "The Empty House." He spoke from the parable of Jesus concerning the unclean

spirit who leaves and then returns with seven spirits more wicked than himself if the house is left unoccupied. The emphasis was that we need to ensure that Jesus is dwelling within our "houses," (our hearts) at all times, or else Satan will occupy the space.

In the morning brother Peter Barnz from Kingston, led out in



The young people give an item

a session in which representatives of each group gave a brief report on their experience in the truth and the developments which were taking place with the work in their area. Of special interest were the reports from the two newest groups, those from Westmoreland and Trelawny. Later, brother Neville Morris led out in a session where representatives of the various groups gave an outline of the plans which they had for promoting the spread of the truth in their area.

Some of the projects were a tract drive by the Kingston group (Philadelphia Fellowship). They also announced that next year their place of worship would be moved from the Priory school to Jamaica College on Old Hope road. The main need of the Clarendon group is assistance in extending their worship area (Sister Bev Walter's verandah) so that more people could be invited out to worship. At the present the space is severely limited. The Manchester group through brother Conard Howard, told of its plans to hold evangelistic

meetings in upper Clarendon in a few weeks time. The groundwork for these meetings has already been done by brothers C. Howard and Neville Morris, and the people are now ready for the public meetings. The St. Elizabeth group stated that there were significant plans afoot for the coming year, but would not say at this time what those plans were. The Westmoreland group is small, consisting of just two ladies with their families of four children. These ladies are, however, full of courage and it is plain to see that their determination and faith are strong. Their plan is to keep on visiting and helping their neighbours in a physical way, sharing the truth with them whenever possible. The material need in their area is very great and they requested help whenever it was possible for believers from other areas to come to physically assist them in the work. The St. James brethren have been visiting people in Hanover and Trelawny as well as in their own parish and have plans to intensify this visitation program

in the new year. The Trelawny group is a brand new fellowship. The six persons in this group have just learned the truth about God and are still going through the pains of rejection by their church brethren and are deciding what direction they are going to take. This is their main concern at the moment, but in the meantime they are doing what they can to make others aware of the truth which they have found.

We came to the end of a well-spent Sabbath with a Bible study on the subject of the godhead, mostly for the benefit of some undecided people among us who had come to visit for the day and wanted to know more about the topic. This study was conducted by P.D. Clayton. By the time it came to an end it was time to say good-bye with much regret. But we rejoiced that it had been a well-spent day and looked forward to our next convention, next year.



### ***Open Face***

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