



2 Cor. 3:18

Open Face

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

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European Report

David Clayton



Brother Ken baptizing Lucian in Romania

This year the trip to Europe was a special experience for me in that for the first time my wife Jen was able to come with me. Howard decided to stay home this year and this opened the way for her to make the trip. I was glad she was able to be with me and I was more contented and felt very little homesickness. I guess it is true that home is where the heart is.

Our trip took us to Romania, Hungary, Germany and Denmark. Each camp meeting was unique in its own way, but the fellowship was good everywhere. It was an especially interesting time for Jen. Black people are not very common in some of the places we visited and some of the incidents which occurred were amusing and at times disconcerting for her. On one occasion two little girls aged about eight or ten stared at us as we were standing by the side of the road in the village where Vlad lives in Romania. The next morning they happened to be passing by Vlad's home and they came and asked his wife Andi, very politely if the lady (Jen) could come out so they could see her because they had never seen such

a person before in their lives. They did not mean any offence and we found it amusing. It was just that she was such a novelty in that part of the world that it was interesting. On another occasion we spoke with a couple who were planning to get married and the lady told us quite seriously that she wished that when they have a child it might look like Jen!

Of course the trip was filled with blessings. As always we were thrilled to see evidences of God's willingness to bring happiness into the lives of His children and to relieve their suffering as there were several instances of healing in answer to prayer. Even since returning home we have received reports of prayers being answered in this regard.

We were also privileged to attend, and to participate in the wedding of Gelu and Raluca. I have known Raluca for several years, but was meeting Gelu for the first time. It was a privilege to share in their moment of happiness and to join in wishing them God's direction and blessing as they started out on their new life together.

However, in this report we will not present a detailed account of what happened in the various places, instead we will share the testimonies of some who attended the campmeetings. On this trip, more than on any other, I was impressed with how effective the internet was as a tool for spreading the gospel. The following experiences will illustrate what I mean.

DANIEL AND MIHAELA

Daniel and Mihaela came to the

campmeeting in Moieciu up in the beautiful hills of Romania. They had belonged to the Orthodox church but had been dissatisfied with the level of Christianity which they experienced there as well as with the fact that the teachings did not meet their desire for deep and meaningful Bible study.

They had been praying for God to direct them to his truth for five years and during this time they had tried several different churches such as the Baptist church and several others, and had even spent a few months attending a Jehovah's Witness congregation. They found out after a while that none of these churches helped them to find a meaningful walk with Jesus. They were dissatisfied with the things they heard and experienced.

One day while searching the internet they came across the sermons which Vlad had uploaded to Youtube from the campmeetings which had been held over the previous years. They were captivated by the subject of Righteousness by Faith which they heard in these messages and as they continued listening they found their interest and appreciation growing. They felt that at

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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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last they were hearing the truth of God's word in a way which met the need of their souls.

They contacted Vlad and arranged to come to the campmeeting. They were the first ones to request baptism of the five persons who were eventually baptized at the campmeeting. Mihaela testified that their search of five years was finally over and they thanked God for His direction.

LUCIAN

Lucian was born into an Adventist family, but when a young man, he turned away from religion and for many years lived the life of a reprobate getting involved in all the vices which the world has to offer. He sunk deeper and deeper into the ways of the world until it seemed there was no coming back for him.

One day in searching the internet he came across



David with Daniel & Mihaela at Moieciu

some sermons on Youtube and found the titles interesting. It was again, Vlad's Youtube channel where he had uploaded all these sermons. Lucian listened to one and it caught his interest, so he started listening to them and for one year he listened to them over and over until he had learned the message thoroughly. As he listened, his heart was changed and he turned away from his life of sin.

However, now he had a desire to meet these people who had shared these messages. He enquired of many people but nobody seemed to know who they were or to have any information about them. Finally he decided to do a search to see if he could find any contact information for "Vlad Ardeias", "David Clayton" or "Howard Williams". To his delight there were 17 hits in Google and he was amazed when he saw that there was a campmeeting beginning the following

day where Vlad and I would be present. The truly amazing thing is that he had been listening to these messages for one year and the very day when he was impressed to do a search to try to make contact with us, was the day before the campmeeting was to begin when I would be in Romania for one week only! This was clearly the hand of God. He quickly arranged with his father (a member of the SDA church) to go with him

to the campmeeting. He was overjoyed when he arrived and he thrilled us all with his testimony. He also asked for baptism and was immersed into Christ on the Sabbath afternoon of the campmeeting.

CLAUDIO

Claudio had abandoned his wife and two children for several years. He went to another woman and gave himself up utterly to a life of sin. He had been a friend of Vlad and even though he was in this terrible situation, Vlad continued to send him the newsletters each month. Claudio was living a life of sin, but there was something in the articles on Righteousness by Faith which touched a chord in his soul. Somehow, God was still speaking to him. He became very interested in these articles and testified that he read each one more than 20 times! As he read and began to understand the gos-





At the wedding of Gelu and Raluca in Romania

pel, a great change took place in him. A miracle of divine grace occurred. He returned to his wife and children, repented of his sins and gave his life to God.

He also was at the campmeeting to fulfill his desire of meeting us and of having us pray for him and lay hands on him.

MICHAEL

I have changed the name of this next person. His story is such a sensitive one that I thought it best to protect his identity. The name Michael is not his real name, but the details of his story are true.

Michael was another person who came to the campmeeting seeking for answers. He had a lurid past. He had been a criminal of note in Romania and eventually gained such notoriety that he was wanted by Interpol. Finally they caught up with him and sent him to prison for several years. These were terrible years for him and he promised God that he would pay him a tithe of whatever he earned if God would protect him and get him out of jail.

When he was finally released from prison he had nothing in his name but a pouch containing a Bible and his release papers. He had nobody in the world and no place to go. When he had been three months old, his mother had wrapped him in a blanket and aban-

world.

Sometime after leaving prison, he was taken in by a Christian family who were members of the Reformed Seventh-day Adventist Church. Michael was attracted to this family because they seemed to be happy and by his own confession, he did not know what it was to be happy. For a while he was contented to remain with this family. He started attending the church and they took him from place to place so he could give his testimony. But after a while he felt disillusioned. The facade fell off and he realized that this family was not really happy and the church members did not seem to have real happiness either. He asked several pastors if they knew the way to be happy. He said that they all told him that he should do this, or do that, but none of the answers helped him.

One year ago, a young lady who attends the Romanian campmeetings each year, and who also attends the SDA Reform Church, fell in love with Michael and

doned him in the snow. He grew up in an orphanage. He had eventually located her when he was a grown man, but she had died shortly after he found her. While he was in prison, his two children had died and their mother had gone to Italy and become a prostitute. His was a truly terrible story. Now he was all alone in the

they were married. She spoke to him about the teachings of righteousness which had moved her at the campmeetings and a desire awakened in his heart to meet with these people and to ask some questions. So this year, he came with his wife to the campmeeting.

When I met with him, he said, "I have one question to ask you and I want you to look into my face and tell me the answer." I waited for his question as I watched the pained expression on his face and recognized that maybe the destiny of this soul depended on my answer. "Tell me the truth," he said, "are you happy? Do you have peace in your heart?" The question caught me by surprise, I did not know his background then, and I had not known of the terrible experiences which he had gone through so I was not prepared for it, but looking at his face I could see that this was a very important question to him. I paused a moment to think carefully about it and to look into my soul.

Was I really happy? there were times when I found it hard to smile, there were times when it seemed that many things were going wrong, there were even times when I failed God and felt miserable about it. Could I truly say that I was happy? But the question made me realize that no matter what happened to me, no matter how much things did not turn out as I had hoped, I did indeed possess an underlying peace



Believers in Miskolc, Hungary heading to the park for a study

and security that nothing in this world had been able to remove from me for the past 37 years. I realized that this was what true happiness meant. Nobody can be happy every moment of his life, even Jesus was not happy all the time, in this sense. However, I understood that what Michael wanted to know was whether I had true peace and assurance in my soul. I felt a surge of joy as I recognized that the answer was “yes” and I told him that I did possess this happiness.

I asked him, “would you like me to tell you how to obtain this peace?” There were tears in his eyes as he nodded his head.

I prayed for wisdom as I began to share my experience with him, as I told him of how I had been converted and of the peace I had found in Christ. I explained to him that there was nothing which could give him this peace but a relationship with God. I made him know that it was God Himself who was the source of this peace, the missing element in his life all these years. I told him that his pain and insecurity came from having to take care of himself, from having to defend himself when he was so alone and incapable in the world. I explained that God loved him and wanted to become his best Friend and I talked with him about how to develop this relationship.

At the end, I asked him, “do you understand.” There was a slight hint of a smile on his face as he took my hand and said, “I think so.” Before we parted he asked me to pray for him and his



Viktor came from Budapest to the Miskolc campmeeting

wife every day. I told him that I would not promise to pray every day for them, but I promised that I would pray often and that when I prayed, it would be with all my heart. He accepted this, but then said, “well at least, every time you feel depressed or discouraged, remember me and as you pray for yourself, pray for me too.” This I gladly promised to do.

VICTOR FROM BUDAPEST,

Viktor is a software developer who lives in Budapest. He works with a major software company which is well-known worldwide. Viktor was introduced to the SDA faith when

he was a teenager. A school mate of his convinced him that the Sabbath was something which was ordained of God and from that time he had the conviction that the SDAs were correct in their faith. However, he had no personal conviction of sin and did not commit himself to religion or to God.

When he was 17 years old, Viktor was diagnosed with a brain tumor and had to undergo a major operation to remove it. The night before the operation as he meditated on what was to follow he was very afraid, knowing that there was the possibility that he would not survive the operation. Knowing that this might be his last night alive, he committed himself to God and immediately



German Campmeeting Group



Some who attended the meetings in Denmark

experienced a great peace and assurance.

After the operation, he became a member of the SDA church for a year, but he did not find what he expected and he stopped attending church for many years.

As he grew older, a desire developed in Viktor to have a family. This became an overwhelming desire but he was not able to find a suitable person to become his wife. This situation began to create a rift between him and God for he could not understand why God did not provide this person for him. His religious experience gradually

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Gospel of Right or Privilege and Women's Ordination.

Adrian Ebens

A special constituency meeting of the Pacific Union Conference was held Sunday afternoon, August 19, 2012, in Southern California. On the agenda were two votes: (1) to change the bylaws of the Pacific Union, allowing the union to be out of sync with General Conference regulations; (2) to approve ordination to the pastoral ministry without regard to gender (ordination of women pastors).

The meeting voted overwhelmingly to accept women's ordination, however, the decision was not able to be implemented because first of all, it was necessary that the previous resolution should have been passed, allowing the PU conference to take decisions contrary to the decisions of the General Conference. This proposal had been narrowly defeated by vote and so the second decision did not really mean anything as the Pacific Union did not have the authority to make the second decision. While it is true that the Pacific Union has been ordaining women to the ministry for some time, this has not been officially accepted by the SDA church and this meeting was an attempt to legitimize what the Conference has been doing for several years. This move failed.

The following article by Pastor Adrian Ebens sheds some light from a different perspective on the underlying principles behind the question of whether or not women should be ordained to the gospel ministry.

Whenever I have been gripped by a story of great struggle, courage and victory in the face of the forces of evil I have naturally identified myself with the central character of the story. As a man who wrestles with sin and lives

within the knowledge of the great controversy, this story is natural for me as it is or most people. So when I come to the story of Jesus and I see the struggle and conquest He engages through the pages of Scripture and as I behold loving patience and wisdom in the face of the cruelty of Satan and his forces, my heart is drawn to Him. I identify with His struggle and I am comforted by the knowledge of His coming total victory over sin. I look forward to standing on the sea of glass with Him and rejoice with Him in His victory over His foes and mine.

This brings us to the central question of the identity of Jesus. What is the story of the Bible that I am identifying with? The story of Jesus that I was taught within my church was that Jesus held His position as God by divine right. Since He possessed all the qualities of divinity inherently, he therefore was naturally entitled to a position of equality with God the Father. As the story was explained to me, Lucifer tried to deny Christ what was naturally His, Satan tried to take away from Christ his title of God. With this understanding of Christ, the central story that underpins the Great Controversy is the conquest of divine right, It is God the Son demonstrating His Godhood before the universe and dispelling the lies of Satan concerning Him. The coming of Jesus to this earth was a demonstration of His love, His patience, His power, His wisdom and His self-sacrifice in order to demonstrate and then lay down His Divinity. I repeat that this story is one of the struggle for recognition for one to be seen as equal with God.

In the person of the begotten Son, I have discovered a very different Jesus. The Son of God holds His position by divine privilege. All things were given to the Son by His Father. He did not seek equality with His Father but

rather took upon Himself the form of a servant in order to reveal the love of His Father. The person of Jesus is one who is filled with a deep sense of joy at being given all things. The person of Jesus does nothing of Himself but trusts His Father to give Him all He needs and to protect and vindicate His name. The Great controversy unfolds as Satan seeking to deny the relationship that Jesus has to the Father, Satan seeks to take from Christ His Sonship and Inheritance. The struggle of Christ here is one who rests in His Father's love while He clings to His Sonship and inheritance. In the gospel context, this backdrop provides a chorus to the theme of our resting in our Father's love and clinging to our sonship and inheritance through Christ. Christ is the Gospel, the Way, the truth and the life.

These two very different stories of Jesus yield very different understandings of the gospel. The Jesus who is engaged in a battle with Satan to reveal His identity of equality with God translates into efforts of giving recognition and equality by human right. The gospel becomes cloaked in a mantle of social justice; of Women's rights to ordination; of a person's right to education and a job; of the rights of the planet to thrive. Do we see the church being swept with social justice issues? Are not these simply echoes of the central narrative understood in the person of Jesus? In this context is not Women's ordination then an issue of the gospel of right to equality? As the Jesus who battles for equality plays out in the hearts and lives of those who serve him, is not this question of women's ordination an echo of the struggle of Christ for equality? The gospel of the Jesus who rules by divine right from his inherent resources is the God who fuels the fires of social justice and equality by right, equality for education, equality by position.

In contrast, the Son of God who receives all things creates a theme in the gospel of immense privilege and joy and trust that our Father will protect and save us. This is the gospel of Scripture, the gospel of immense privilege, the gospel of an incredible gift by the Father in giving His Son. This giving by the Father is stamped and sealed in the story of Jesus who was given all things. Jesus received all things, but He took in order to give. Of course when one lives with such immense privilege, he will value humanity, education and the planet as gifts from the Father to care for, but it is a love born of privilege not right.

As long as our Church presents the story of Jesus as one who is God by His divine right, then the questions of social justice and equality with naturally play out in our lives as we emulate the struggle of a Jesus seeking equality and recognition. I am asking my Church to come back to the Son who rules by Divine privilege, who was given all things in order to give. (See Desire of Ages Page 21) A Son who

does not seek equality because He knows that God is His Father and that the Father will ensure all things are done decently and in order. This Jesus does not seek sameness (platonic eros) with His Father but simply clings to the Word of His Father that He is His Beloved Son (biblical agape). His inheritance from His Father is the clear distinguisher between them both. So too, Eve's inheritance from Adam, her very name taken from man is the blessed distinguisher between man and woman, both human, yet distinct by the inheritance and so with Father and Son, both God yet distinct by the inheritance of the Son from His Father. The inheritance removes all discussion of the striving for equality and the desire for sameness, all this is swept away by the joy of privilege.

Six years ago from my vantage point of a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church I saw the issues that now threaten the unity of the church over Women's ordination relating to the issues of church and family governance. The writing of my book *Return*

of Elijah was primarily about Church governance though most understand it to be simply against the Trinity. The God we worship defines methods of human authority and how they are executed. The narrative that forces itself upon you from a co-equal Trinity based on inherent qualities is one of social and legal justice. The Trinity of Adventism logically demands the social justice of Women's ordination, it must be central to its gospel theme. The conservative position of male only ordination coupled with the co-equal trinity is logically inconsistent. The Trinity's spiritualism of terms Father and Son should naturally allow spiritualising the terms "Husband of one wife" for an elder or pastor. Either we go back to the literal Father and Son and embrace a theology of inheritance and privilege or we ordain women as spiritual "husbands of one wife" and co-equal leaders by divine example leading to human right. That is the logical choice.

The CUC and PUC union conferences are only carrying out the legitimate struggle of the Jesus found in the Trin-

Son of God - gospel of privilege	God the Son - gospel of right
Inherited all power and authority from His Father. John 5:26, Matt 28:18; John 3:35	Has all power and authority inherently and received it from no one.
Distinct from the Father by Inheritance – distinct in being which makes title significant. Heb 1:1-3	Same as the Father by inherent power – distinct only in title which makes title irrelevant.
Rules by Divine Privilege – Granted the Right. Phil 2:11, Rev 3:20.	Rules by Divine Right – assumes the privilege.
Rests in His Sonship relation to His Father – was made equal by divine privilege. John 5:18	Asserts equality to the Father – assumes equality by divine right.
Does what His Father commands. Approaches Father by Spirit of intercession recognising His Father as the great source of all who gives from His heart of love. (agape - makes equal) John 5:19,30. Ps 36:9, GC 479, DA 21.	Collaborates with Father and Spirit (as separate being) to decide outcomes. Approaches Father by Spirit of self-assurance leading to mutual respect and love (platonic eros - seeks equal).
Sets example to humanity of equality by an inheritance relationship – The words Father and Son mean something relationally. Matt 3:17	Sets example to humanity of equality by power (omnipotence), knowledge (omniscience) and age (sempiternity) - The words Father and Son are only functional titles with no connection to their actual being which is therefore a mystery.
Sets example to humanity of one who receives from Supreme authority in order to give. John 5:19-22	Sets example to humanity of one who seeks to demonstrate equality by revealing inherent qualities.
Sets example of trusting the Father to provide whatever position is given and rests content in that position without desiring exaltation. Phil 2:7-9, 1 Pet 5:6	Sets example of one who seeks to be recognized in the highest possible position.
Lays foundation for Male headship in the home and the church. 1 Cor 11:3, Tit 2:3-5	Lays foundation for the most capable to lead in the home and the church.

ity, the struggle for equality and recognition. A struggle that is worth the sacrifice of unity because this struggle is seen as a gospel struggle not mere human desire and opinion. It is the struggle of the Jesus they see in Adventism. I submit to you my book *Return of Elijah* if you have not read it with a view of addressing Women's ordination. For me that was the most pressing issue. The issue of Women's ordination will not subside because it is linked to the fundamental issues of which Jesus you serve and what Gospel you believe. Beyond this I wrote the book *Life Matters* (contact us if you can't use Amazon. com) to provide a systematic view of how an understanding of authority and blessing affect core Adventist teachings. For the implications for family church and community flowing out of an under-

standing of a real Father and Son authority structure see my book *Divine Pattern*.

Let us pray for our church that we will regain the great controversy story that carries the theme of privilege rather than right; of inheritance rather than inherency; of relationship rather than position.

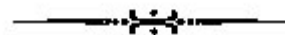
One final observation. Whose story in the great controversy is the one of seeking equality through a struggle for recognition? Is this not the story of Satan himself? Is not this push for woman's ordination simply a cameo of the central theme of Satan's view of the great controversy – the desire for recognition and equality? The Jesus I serve has no such struggle, He rests calmly in His inheritance. His struggle is one of His true relationship to God

as His Father, protector and provider.

Choose you this day which Jesus underpins your great controversy story. Is it the Jesus who rules by divine right or by divine privilege.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (9) As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9)

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (John 17:3)



Campmeeting Information

The Jamaican campmeeting begins on Thursday, October 11 and continues until Monday, October 15. We begin on Thursday evening and end Midday on Monday. Remember the date and be sure to mark it on your calendar. We expect this campmeeting to be a great blessing and all who can possibly make it are invited to attend and not miss out.

The theme of the campmeeting will be, *“The Harmony of The Gospel.”* This campmeeting will be a means of establishing God's people more fully in the truths which He has brought to our attention over the past twenty years. We will explore the perfect harmony in what God has revealed as we have studied His word together.

As we look back at the direction we have taken over the past few years, it is evident that God has been directing us and one truth has linked to another in a harmonious chain. The present focus on the baptism of the holy spirit and spiritual gifts

is only the simple conclusion which arises from understanding the truth about God, Righteousness by faith and affiliated truths. Following these truths through to their logical conclusion has brought us to where we are today.

In addition to the speakers from Jamaica, we will have as guest speakers Brothers Ken Corklin and Lenworth Frankson from the United States.

The campmeeting will be held at the Bethel Mission campground in Newport, Manchester. This place is located just about eight miles to the South of Mandeville. Simply travel to the town of Newport, turn left at the town square and drive East along the road towards Pratville for approximately a half mile. You will come upon the entrance to the campgrounds on the right. There will be a sign there.

The campmeeting fees will be \$1100.00 (US \$13.00) per person, per night. This will cover the cost of the campsite fees as well as two meals, Lunch and a light supper. Each person will have to pro-

vide his own breakfast.

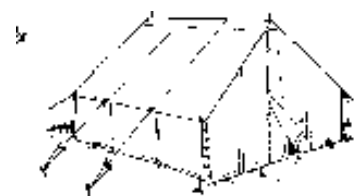
Things to take with you

Don't forget your Bible!! Remember also a notebook and pen.

You will need to take your own bedding (sheets, blanket, pillow etc.) and toiletries (toothpaste, soap washcloths and towels etc.). You will also need to take your own eating utensils such as plates, cups knives and forks etc. Don't forget also to take your own breakfast supplies as breakfast will not be provided!

The campmeeting program will begin with worship in the mornings at 6:30 a.m. and will end in the evening with the final meeting beginning at 7.00 p.m.

See you there!



Sister Judy's Letter

We received this letter and had to re-print it. It has been edited and some names have been omitted but we hope you will be blessed as we were.
=====

I had to write you. I am reading *Open Face*, Nov. 2007, called "Two False Gospels." I have been intensely praying for God to show me if what I used to believe is a false gospel or not. Well, your articles are an answer to prayer! I praise God for your faithfulness, courage and honesty, in telling the truth.

I am still struggling to change over to the truth just the way I did when Larkland Heath shared with me that the Trinity is a false doctrine. He helped me so much. Since I was raised a Catholic I have had to deal with all kinds of false garbage, but I am so willing to have God remove all the junk inside of me that when He shows me the truth, I accept it after studying for myself and praying lots.

I am still learning and it takes time to integrate and digest all this new truth. It took a very long time for me to understand the Godhead message because God had to change me from the inside because of all the garbage I learned in Catholic school, college and graduate school (specialized in evolutionary biology, and anthropology).

I have been struggling a lot because I come from an alcoholic, Catholic, southern Italian family. My parents acquired meanness from their Catholic upbringing and from the priests and nuns who were sometimes mean and sometimes drunk. So in my life there were a lot of mean drunks, because the god they worshiped was a mean drunk. I know that we become like what we worship. Now, since reading your articles I understand that, because of this false gospel I believed, I have been trying to appease a mean, vindictive god. I was not able to shake the idea that God is mean. The first time I read that "God so loved the world," it freaked me out because no

god in my life was ever loving. I just learned that god and people were to be avoided at all costs.

Since I have been reading your articles I am starting to see that God is loving, I could not "see" it before and it's because of the "Free Choice" false gospel. You explain it so beautifully making it easy to understand for sin-damaged people like me. I am half way down in your Righteousness by faith audio sermons and one thing really stands out to me, you exalt Jesus more than any sermon or talk I have ever heard, just like Ellen White did. I am so thankful that you are helping me to see the real truth, because I was getting nowhere and beating myself up because of my actions not being right.

I can't express adequately in words how much your articles and preaching have done for me. I am in Christ and free, finally. My eyes are being opened more and more everyday. Until I started reading your articles and listening to your righteousness by faith sermons, I was ready to dump Christianity as a hoax. I wasn't able to get out of the pit of sin. I would try and try to make my actions and behavior "right", only to fall again. I was overwhelmed, perplexed, and extremely frustrated to say the least. I kept praying for help and sensing a wall between me and God. I felt like my prayers were just absorbed into thin air, so what was the use of even bothering?

I kept reading A.T. Jones Third Angel's messages 1893 and 1895, but wasn't "getting it". Now I know why. My underlying belief was that I had to make my actions and thoughts "right". I believed in righteousness by works and I didn't even know it. It scares me to realize how close I was to throwing God out of my life. I can remember praying and begging for God to help me, because I was so upset and frustrated with myself and "Christians" in general, because I saw victory nowhere. So I started thinking it was all

a cruel joke. I told God that I was desperate and if I did not receive some kind of help - well goodbye!

To top it off my computer would NOT download any of brother X's sermons for me. That is when it dawned on me to try your audio sermons. I realized that this was the help that God was sending me. He heard my prayers of anguish and sent me to Restoration Ministries for that help. Guess what, your sermons come on my computer loud and clear. At first that baffled me, but then I realized that for some reason God refused to let me get brother X's sermons by choking my computer, or whatever He did to it, and your sermons were just what I needed.

Now I can see clearly why you and some of the independent ministries have split. I have intensified my prayers for you and am broken-hearted about so many believing a false gospel and in a false, mean god. I remember reading your first article on righteousness by faith in 2005 and it stirred my heart a lot. Then brother X countered it and my hopes were dashed in pieces. I took his word for it and I was so sick with the mold fogging my brain (she was then living in a house which was affected by mold and it seriously affected her mental faculties), that I couldn't study for myself like I am doing now. So I thought, "Brother X sure knows better than me, so he must be right." I was totally perplexed as to what to do. False belief took hold of me since then and I went through anguish for seven more years. I am not blaming anyone but myself for accepting falsehood. I was sick and baffled, too sick to do anything about it for seven years, but God gave me another chance.

I have some big decisions to make, but God will help me. I will choose His way, He brought me this far, and I have determined to follow Him no matter what. I want the kind, loving God you

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Levels of being and goodness

David Clayton

DIVINITY

The first and ultimate level of being is *divinity*. Here sits God the Father at the summit of all life and existence. He is the ultimate authority in the universe and is the great Source of all things. Everything which exists came from Him and all exist by the power of His word. There is none like Him in authority and power, He is above all. He is inherently good, meaning He is absolutely and totally selfless. All His choices spring from His nature of goodness. It is the way He is, it is the nature of His existence.

Next to Him is Jesus His Son. Not equal to Him in authority, but equal to Him in divinity, Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. Possessing the same nature as His Father, having inherited it when He was begotten from God's own being, He is the same life-form as God and exists on the same level of being. He is impelled by the same motivation as God the Father. All His deeds also spring from His nature of selfless love. God and Jesus are good in themselves, it is the way they are by nature.

ANGELS

Angels are the next level of being. They were created by God long before mankind existed. In the greatest rebellion in history, Lucifer, the chief of the angels led a rebellion against God's government and demonstrated the truth that only God and His Son are good in themselves.

Angels were not designed to operate and live by themselves. They were designed to be inhabited by the good spirit of God and when they are in this union, they live pure and perfect lives of selfless love. They live only to serve others.

Lucifer and his friends rejected God's influence in their lives, the separated themselves from His spirit and the result was that they became filled with

self-love and now live only to please themselves. The principle of selfless love, the mark of divinity has been expelled from their lives. They cannot be good without God, for God alone is good in Himself.

HUMANITY

The next level of being is *humanity*. Man was made lower than the angels. He was made a physical being, existing on a different plane than the angels. He was different than the angels in his outward nature, but inwardly, he, like all intelligent beings was designed to live in union with God. He was created good, but no being can be good, unless he is united with God, for as the Bible says, "there is none good but one, that is God (Matt. 19:17)." Man therefore was good, because he was united to God. His spirit was joined to the spirit of God.

Tragically, man followed in the footsteps of Lucifer, the fallen angel, when he chose to reject God's direction in his life and chose the government of self instead of that of God. He rejected God's spirit and being left only to himself, he lost his goodness and became evil, like the fallen angels. However, when man fell he did not fully understand God's love and goodness and therefore there was room for him to be brought back to God if he was able to receive a greater understanding of God's love. So God did not turn away from man when he rejected God, but rather, God put a plan in place to restore man to himself and to make it possible for the life of God to be reunited with man, thus restoring him to his original state of goodness.

ANIMALS

Animals exist on the next level of being. They are morally incapable. Yes, they are able to choose, but not to discriminate between right and wrong. It is true that some animals demonstrate unusual intelligence but they are wholly

moved by self-preserving motives and chemical reactions taking place in their bodies. Animals were not designed to be dwelling places for the spirit of God and they are not morally accountable for their actions. They sometimes choose what we regard as good, because it benefits them, they also choose what we see as evil for the same reason. They do not choose because they see actions as being either morally good or morally bad.

PLANTS

Plants have no intelligence, no moral capability. They are not even capable of making conscious choices. They are capable of actions which produce consequences, seemingly good, or evil, but they are wholly directed by chemical and physical reactions taking place in and around them.

WHERE ARE WE?

It might seem unnecessary to mention animals and plants as we discuss levels of being, however, they have been included because it helps us to see that many persons operate on principles which make them no different from animals and plants. Some are motivated to behave simply on the basis of the chemical and physical changes taking place in their bodies such as hormonal surges or changes. Others are moved only by the instinct for self-preservation or self-promotion. If these are the things which determine how we behave, then in what way are we any different from the lower forms of life?

Understanding the true nature of goodness, we are directed to the truth that all who obtain goodness and who live good, holy lives must obtain this in God Himself. We can only ever be good if we are united to God. This is the foundation of all righteousness and it must be the root of all our endeavours. Those who seek good must seek God.



Living Healthier and Longer

Lenworth Frankson

Growing old and healthy is a hope that most people cherish and something they desire to experience. The sad truth however is that millions, including Christians, will never experience longevity and good health.

Most Adventists are familiar with the *NEW START* approach to living healthily. *NEW START* is an acronym for, Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperance, Air, Rest, and Trust. However, though most of us are aware of the necessity of these elements in our lives, not many of us really consciously implement these principles in the way we live our lives from day to day.

Traditionally, many Adventists do not eat meat, and are strict vegetarians, yet these same people have many health issues. I do believe that a vegetarian diet is the best diet for humans, and there are many studies that strongly support this truth, but a vegetarian diet alone will not guarantee a long and healthy life.

At creation God initially gave to Adam and all the animals a plant based diet to ensure optimal health.

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. (Genesis 1:29, 30)

Strict adherence to these eight health principles are great and are highly recommended even outside Adventist circles but there is still something wrong for although we try to live by these rules, we still get sick. The question is, why? There are things in our

everyday lives which affect us in such a significant and negative way that we experience sickness, sadness, disease, depression and even premature death. The reason or at least one of the major factors that contribute to this problem, I believe, is “*stress*”.

Stress related illness is more common than many of us think. In fact, some experts believe that most illnesses are stress related. So how do we keep stress under control in our lives? Can we avoid it? When we get sick, we usually look to a physical reason for getting ill but the truth of the matter is that, if our immune systems were strong and not weakened by stress, we probably would be able to resist almost any illness.

If stress becomes excessive, prolonged and chronic, it actually breaks down our body’s defense mechanism and leaves us open and vulnerable to disease and illness. We may get colds and the flu more often simply because our stress levels are high, and even more seriously we could end up with serious illnesses, like heart disease or cancer. The quality, intensity and length of the stress, all determine the effect the stress will have on our bodies.

It appears that some people can handle huge amounts of stress without severe consequences while others get sick, even when their stressors are not that bad. The reason appears to be a person’s ability to handle the stress and to relax. This ability seems to be even more important than the level of the stress itself. How stress affects our immune system is definitely dependent on our ability to relax and handle stress and anxiety. It is well researched and documented that stress and the immune system are connected.

Some of the illness and diseases related to stress are:

- High blood pressure

- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- Allergies
- Asthma
- Hives or stress rash
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Cancer

Stress related illness can take many forms and not only can stress affect our overall health physically, but of course it can also affect our mental and spiritual health as well. When we fail to enjoy the contentment and peace that Jesus offers we sadden our Savior, stifle the opportunity for strengthening the relationship with Him and weaken our faith. Jesus has said,

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

His invitation is still there. Life is full of stressful events that we sometimes cannot avoid but we can determine how they affect us. The Bible tells us that: “*There remaineth a rest to the people of God.*” This rest is simply resting “*in him.*” Friends, God wants us to be stress free. It is in and through his son Jesus Christ that we find real relief from our stress. He offers to take care of our problems and he will do it. He tells us in 1 Peter 5:7 to cast all our cares upon him for he cares for us. He loves us with an unfathomable love that is beyond our comprehension.

Someone once said; “*His love is like a vast ocean, without bottom or shore.*” How significant is this to you? Do you truly believe this? “*Casting all our cares*” on someone who “*was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,*” means putting complete

trust in someone who is “*acquainted with grief...and carried our sorrows*”; someone who has our best interest at heart and knows the beginning and the end. By trusting; we let go of stress and learn to relax and have peace. Our faith grows, and that is what we need. Talking to his disciples, before his betrayal, Jesus told them:

“*Peace I leave with you, **my peace** I give unto you*”... “*Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*”.... “*I am the way, the truth, and the life*”... “*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you*”. (John 14)

Jesus is saying to us that we should not be stressed concerning anything in this life because He has already taken care of the problem and He is there with us all the way. He wants us to have peace and He offers it. He confirms this idea later when he tells His disciples in John 16:33

... *in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*

Circumstances in the life of a Christian may be dark and mysterious but they are the ways of providence no matter how great the deprivation and suffering. We are to look away from these to the unseen and the eternal. We have the assurance that all things are working for our good. When we see this in the light of the cross, the things of this life will appear as vanity and emptiness.

The things which are seen, worldly honor, worldly pleasure, riches, and glory, are to be eclipsed by the beauty, and glory of the things now unseen. The things of this world are temporal, enduring only for a time, while the things which are not seen are eternal, enduring through endless ages. Let us remember that in the near future we shall see how closely all our trials were connected with our salvation, and how these light afflictions worked out for us “*a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*” (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Learning how to handle stress and to relax will promote happier, healthier lives allowing us to function at a much higher level. Here are a few suggestions for handling stress:

- **Stay active.** Daily 30-minute walks including deep breathing exercises are vital to keeping you young.
- Get enough of these foods to keep body and brain humming: **whole grains, fruits, and veggies;**
- **Get next to none of these:** saturated fats, trans fats, added sugars.
- Sleep 7.5 to 8 hours a night. **Every night**
- **Meditation, prayer and spiritual growth.** Make this a lifestyle not an occasional event. It is about a relationship not a duty.
- Do Not Smoke. Yes, odd as it might seem, many Christians including SDAs do smoke.
- Stimulate your brain. **Do puzzles, learn languages, and take on new challenges.**
- Be a part of a worthy project or movement, like “neighbors helping neighbors”
- Think positive. Look at the cup half full not half empty.

Friends a “*stress free life*” is definitely a major player in living a long and healthy life. We might be predisposed to some genitival flaws but we are not doomed to be unhealthy and to die early. Drugs are not the way to health and longevity, we are. God has given us the intellect and the resources to live above the so called “normal life.”

The apostle Paul tells us that the Father “*hath delivered us from the power of darkness, (one aspect being stress) and hath translated (transferred) us into the kingdom of his dear Son...who is the head of the body, the church:*” (Colossians 1:13, 18)

I know that this text’s primary meaning and application is in reference to a person’s born again spiritual transformation in Christ but there is also an-

other application to this passage that refers to the physical, “*for in him we live, and move, and have our being.*” Our bodies belong to Christ and he is our head. Friends, a stressful lifestyle is not for us and Christ offers us one that is free from this. My prayer is that we all like Paul, will be able to say in an honestly, experiential way:

“... ***godliness with contentment is great gain.*** For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And ***having food and raiment let us be therewith content***” (1 Timothy 6:6-8)

“*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content*” (Philippians 4:11)

May God help us all, to trust as we obey.



Judy’s Letter

From page 8

preach about so beautifully. I love listening to you because you are filled with gratitude to God and his Son and the love you have for God really stands out as well as your zeal for Him. It is contagious and that is a good thing!

Its about time we took the heavenly Canaan the way Joshua and Caleb believed they could back in the day. I accept the message of righteousness by faith, I want to be laid in the dust. I ended up in four 12 step programs years ago because of addictions (sin). But the gift I got from them was a spiritual awakening to the reality that there is a God. AA introduced me to God and God kept me safe there until He led me to the Great Controversy book in a thrift shop which I bought for \$2.00 in 1997. The principles of AA and the Great Controversy changed the direction of my life.

I want to take this message to others somehow, but I don't know how yet. I am sure God will help me to do that. Thank you so much and please keep preaching no matter what, and encourage your friends who are giving the message of the loud cry of the 3rd angel to keep on also. I would never have figured all of this out if it wasn't for you being faithful to God and forsaking all for Him, even your good friends. I have lost all too because of keeping the Sabbath and following God and His Son, but I know that if I have them I have everything.

Your sister in Christ,

Judy



European Report

continued from page 4

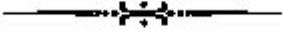
grew cold and the beauty and peace of it was lost. He continued like this for some years.

Two years ago, Viktor was filled with a longing to return to the peace and happiness which he had once known with God and he recognized that his wish for a wife had become an obstacle between him and God. He gave himself to God again unconditionally, committing himself to God, regardless of whether or not God gave him a family. His peace returned to him and for the past two years he has been walking again in that joyful relationship with God.

He returned to the Adventist Church, but soon became aware that there was a controversy over the nature of the

godhead. He had never believed in the Trinity, but never gave it serious thought. Now he visited the internet and started to examine the evidences for and against the Trinity. In his search he came upon Janos' website (www.filadelfia.hu) and discovered that there was a body of non-Trinitarian Adventists in Hungary. He contacted Janos and as a result he found out about the campmeeting and came to have fellowship with non-trinitarians for the first time in his life.

These were just a few of the experiences which we heard and saw as we traveled in these countries. We experienced the working of God and thanked Him for the privilege of being co-labourers with Him.



Open Face

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