

Preface

The booklet you are holding in your hands has been the object of a fascinating turn of events. The rough copy was sent to me in the mail at the beginning of March 2002 for proof-reading. Our mail boxes were vandalized at about the time when it should have arrived. Another copy was mailed to me but I never received it. This time it must have been lost in the mail!

A month later, a friend invited me to go to The Flats, a park I did not know the existence of until then. It is located a few miles from where I lived in Abbotsford, B.C.

When we arrived there, we started walking and immediately I spotted something on the ground. It was a little book covered in mud. As I reached down to pick it up, a strange feeling came over me as I immediately recognized the front cover. I just couldn't bring myself to believe that

I had just stumbled over the very booklet that had twice eluded me! My friend seemed quite amused by the puzzled look on my face. After I explained to her how it had been stolen from my mail box a month earlier, her eyes grew big!

It is now left to the reader to decide whether or not the message it contains is appropriate for this time. May God bless you greatly as it unfolds before your eyes!

In Christian love,

Laval Picard



Introduction

I was born and raised in La Belle Province, close to the border of New Brunswick and the State of Maine, in the small town of Dégelis, near a very beautiful lake. The name "Dégelis" was given to this picturesque town after the Madawaska river. Winding its way along the north end of town, sections of this river, it is claimed, do not freeze, even during the most rigorous winter. Hence the name "*Dégelis*."

I received a Catholic education. After graduating from high school, I attended College for two years. But it was during my first year at the University, near Quebec city, that I began to ask myself so many questions about the meaning of life and death.. I suppose one could say that I was hungry and thirsting for something I did not possess. I determined to find the answers.

I began searching for any book I hoped would help me find the answers. I found myself drawn to a collection of books by a Buddhist author by the name of Rampa. After I read the whole collection, though I enjoyed reading every single book, I still felt the same emptiness.

Then one day my attention was drawn to a book on display at the Canadian Bible Society. I wasted no time purchasing it and reading it. As a result, I became convinced, for the first time in my life, that I must begin to read and study the Bible for myself. I spent the next year doing just that. At the same time, I kept purchasing other books from The Canadian Bible Society. I sensed that I was going in the right direction by studying the Bible and reading these books and yet, something was still missing. It was not until I was introduced to the writings of an exceptional author that the Bible began to really make sense to me!

What a delight it was for me to read these two books: The Great Controversy and The Desire of Ages by E.G. White. It didn't take long before I became convinced that the author had to have been inspired. I spent hours and hours "devouring" these books. Impressed with my zeal for knowledge, my new-found friends convinced me that the Lord was calling me to the ministry!

Before I realized what was happening to me, I found myself in Alberta, Canada, three thousand miles away, taking Theology in an Adventist College. During the first two years I became aware that like Ancient Israel, God's people had been "wandering in the wilderness" due to the rejection of "a most precious message" that the Lord had sent to them many years ago. See Selected Messages, Vol.1, pp.234,235.

During the course of my studies, this burning subject became the topic of many discussions among some of the

students. It soon became clear to me that no one seemed to know exactly what the message was. Even to this day, it remains hidden to the majority, even to some who have spent many years trying to discover it! This we shall see later.

It was not until the month of January 1999, after many years of long, protracted search for this message, that the Lord finally succeeded in opening the eyes of my understanding. All should be given the opportunity to see and understand this message for themselves. Had the light that was to lighten the whole earth with its glory been received, believed, and acted upon, in 1888, the work of proclaiming the last message of mercy to the world would have been finished and the Lord would have come for the redemption of His people.

May the Holy Spirit give us hearts to receive, believe, and act upon the light that is soon to lighten the whole earth with its glory. This

small booklet is the result of many years of earnest studies in an effort to make clear the message that some of us have declared to be the most elusive message ever sent to God's people in the history of past ages, though the Lord Himself had declared it to be "just as simple as ABC."

May the Lord give us hearts to receive this special testimony in my prayer today.

Laval Picard

Nothing New Under The Sun

History repeats itself. "The thing that has been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun." Ecc.1:9.

In other words, "The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past." The Great Controversy, p.343.

That the Advent Movement is an important movement of the present no one can deny and it has its parallel in the history of Ancient Israel: "The remnant church is called to go through an experience similar to that of the Jews." Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.387.

Not one of us can afford to ignore the following warning:

"The trials of the children of Israel, and their attitude just before the first coming of Christ,

have been presented before me, again and again, to ILLUSTRATE the position of the people of God in their experience before the second coming of Christ--how the enemy sought every occasion to take control of the minds of the Jews, and today he is seeking to blind the minds of God's servants, that they may not be able to discern the precious truth." Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.406.

What was the attitude of the Jewish people at the time of the first coming of Christ?

"In the days of Christ the religious leaders of the people felt that they were rich in spiritual treasure. The prayer of the Pharisee, 'God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men,' expressed the feeling of his class and, to a great degree, of the whole nation. Jesus had presented the cup of blessing to those who felt that they were 'rich, and increased with goods, and had need of

nothing.'" Rev.3:17; Mount of Blessing, p.6.

We are told that this will be the attitude of the Advent people just prior to the second coming of Christ. The next statement, from the same source, should leave no doubt in the mind of the reader:

"Here is represented a people who pride themselves in their possession of spiritual knowledge and advantages--who are satisfied in their own self-sufficiency--who claim to know and possess everything." Selected Messages, Vol.1, pp. 357,358.

The illustration is, one must admit, very striking! To a great degree, then, this will be the attitude of the majority of the different parties of Advent believers before the second coming of Christ:

"He who feels whole, who thinks he is reasonably good, and is contented

with his condition, does not seek to be a partaker of the grace and righteousness of Christ. Pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give." Mount of Blessing, p.7.

Therefore, "To those who are indifferent at this time, Christ's warning is, 'I will spew thee out of my mouth.' The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that Christ cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God; that He cannot endorse your teaching of His word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you." Testimonies, Vol.6, p.408.

"Christ cannot take up the names of those who are satisfied in their own self-sufficiency. He cannot importune in behalf of a people who feel no need of His help, who claim to know

and possess everything." Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.358.

In the days of Christ, "there were some who had a sense of their spiritual poverty, who knew that they could not possibly save themselves, or of themselves do any righteous action. They were the poor in spirit whom the Lord declared to be blessed." Mount of Blessing, pp.6,7; Matt.5:3; 1 Cor.1:26-29.

So it is today. While the majority feel satisfied with their spiritual condition, there are some who are thirsting and hungering for salvation:

"In every congregation in the land there are souls unsatisfied, hungering and thirsting for salvation. By day and by night the burden of their heart is, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? They listen eagerly to popular discourses, hoping to learn how they may be justified before God. But too often they hear

only a pleasing speech, an eloquent declamation. There are sad and disappointed hearts in every religious gathering." Review and Herald, March 8, 1881; Faith and Works, p.32.

"There are many who want to know what they must do to be saved." Evangelism, p.188. It is to them that the gospel is to be proclaimed:

"The gospel is to be preached to the poor. Not to the spiritually proud, those who claim to be rich and in need of nothing is it revealed, but to those who are humble and contrite. One fountain only has been opened for sin, a fountain for the poor in spirit." Desire of Ages, p.300; Job 22:29.

The "poor in spirit" are "those who recognize that their great need is their only claim on God's mercy." Desire of Ages, p.317. They know that "they have nothing to recommend them to God," and therefore "the plea that

they urge NOW and EVER is their utterly helpless condition that makes God's redeeming power a necessity." Ibid, p.317. In other words, "their argument is their great need." Ibid, p.317; Jer.17:9; Luke 18:13.

In the years preceding the Minneapolis meeting in 1888, "the poor in spirit" began to seriously inquire and agonize about the matter of salvation. Day by day they were crying out to God saying, "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?" To them, the Lord, in His great mercy, sent "a most precious message." *Testimonies to Ministers*, p.91.

To the "poor in spirit" this message would have been "meat in due season." Matt.24:45; Isa.50:4. But as it was to be expected, "When light begins to shine forth to make clear the plan of redemption to the people, the enemy works with all diligence, that the light may be shut away from the hearts of men." *Review and Herald*, Sept.3, 1889.

These words were penned at a time when God had designed that this precious message of redemption should come to His people as the latter rain:

"We have been in the time of the latter rain since the Minneapolis meeting." E.G. White, 1893 General Conference Bulletin, p.377.

The next statement removes any doubt as to whether or not the enemy succeeded in shutting away the precious truth from the hearts of God's people:

"Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been kept away from the world." Selected Messages, Vol.1, pp.234,235.

When, through the illumination of the Spirit of God, efforts are made to make plain the answer to the question, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? "Satan calls to his aid all the fallen angels of his realm." *The Great Controversy*, p.398. The fallen angels cast their shadow across our pathway to intercept the Heaven-sent light. Hence the following warning:

"Satan will work to quench the light God has for every soul, by casting his shadow across the pathway to intercept every ray of heavenly light. He knows that his time is short. The people of God must cleave to God, else they will lose their bearings." E.G. White, *Bible Commentary*, Vol.4, p.1179.

Shortly after the proclamation of the message in 1888, the Lord sent this testimony:

"There seems to be a cloudy atmosphere that has gathered about

the soul of man and that has shut in the mind. It is next to impossible to break through this atmosphere of doubt and unbelief. It is next to impossible to arouse man's vital interests so that he may understand what he must do to be saved." *Faith and Works*, p.64.

Not One In One Hundred

Why is it that they were not able to discern the precious truth? Because "Satan is working with all his hellish power to quench that light which should burn brightly in the soul and shine forth in good works. He is working against this all the time." *E.G. White, Bible Commentary, Vol.4, p.1179; Faith and Works, p.72; Matt.5:16.*

It is not because the matter of salvation is too difficult to understand. "We do not understand the

matter of salvation. It is just as simple as ABC. But we don't understand it." E.G. White, May 11, Manuscript 1, 1889; Faith and Works, p.64. Once again, these words were penned only a few months after the proclamation of the message at Minneapolis in 1888.

We need to be enlightened in regard to the plan of salvation. In no uncertain terms we are told that "we do not understand it." Not even one in one hundred does: "There is NOT ONE IN ONE HUNDRED who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare." Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.360.

Not one in one hundred! These words from the apostle Paul to the Corinthians certainly apply to us today:

"If any man think he knoweth anything he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" 1 Cor.8:2.

A Call To Reform

The date is February 6, 1896. Sister White is in Australia. She is writing to the brethren in America. Under the subtitle, "A CALL TO REFORM," she writes:

"The people to whom God has entrusted eternal interests, the depositories of truth pregnant with eternal results, the keepers of light that is to illuminate the whole world, have lost their bearings." Testimonies to Ministers, p.397.

The people to whom God had entrusted the precious light of truth had lost their bearings! Would that not explain why, many, especially in the last fifty years or so, have been trying to get our bearings back?

Trying To Rediscover The Light

In 1950, Elders Wieland and Short, who were then missionaries to Africa, published their first edition of their well-renown book, THE 1888 MESSAGE RE-EXAMINED, in which are these words found:

"Many even in the world today are trying to discover the light which God revealed to His people in 1888. No one has so far been successful. Religious thinkers are yearning for something no one clearly understands, though it would seem that a few are on the verge of discovery." Wieland and Short, The 1888 Message Re-Examined, 1950, pp.242,243.

Thirty-seven years later, in 1987, Wieland and Short published the revised edition of that book. On page 184, we read these words:

"It would seem that 1888 presents a problem unique in the long history of God's confrontation with His people. There is a precious truth involved

therein that seems more elusive than any in the history of past ages." Wieland and Short, 1888 Message Re-Examined, Second Edition, 1987.

This begs the question, How could a message which was said to be "*just as simple as ABC,*" become "*more elusive than any in the history of past ages,*" and that for more than a century? How could the people of God fail to grasp a most precious message which Mrs. White declared to be just as simple as ABC? Though the enemy is working against this message "all the time," should not those in responsible positions have been the first ones to catch the first rays of the light that is to illuminate the whole earth?

It is difficult to believe let alone to accept that after the Minneapolis meeting in 1888 not one in one hundred understood for himself what he must do to be saved when the Lord had made the matter of salvation just

as simple as ABC! See Faith and Works, p.64.

Today, it would be wise to seriously "examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith." 2 Cor.13:5; 1 Cor.8:2. "Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor.10:12.

It is indeed mind-boggling, to say the very least of it, that this "most precious message," which was said to be "just as simple as ABC," "presented in clear and distinct lines," "spoken in demonstration of the Spirit," should somehow have become, for more than a century, "more elusive than any in the history of past ages! "

The Message

In her address to the brethren who were assembled at this most illustrious Conference in 1888, Sister White spoke solemnly as she reflected upon the message from God.

She writes, "Be careful how you treat it. Take off the shoes from off your feet, for you are on holy ground." *Testimonies to Ministers*, p.90.

In one of the most solemn appeals to them, she spelled out, in all its beauty and simplicity, the very message which some of us have, for so many years, been so desperately trying to discover:

"How long will you hate and despise the messengers of God's righteousness? God has given them His message. *THEY BEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD: There is salvation for you but only through the merits of Jesus Christ.*" *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp.96,97.

This statement above contains the "most precious message" that not one in one hundred understands for himself! Only as we accept this message and act upon it will we get our spiritual bearings back. "Believe it because it is the truth, because

God says it, and lay hold upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour." Faith and Works, p.76.

This is the light God designed that it should come to His people as the latter rain! It is written that "those who received the message were "greatly blessed" as the merits of Christ were applied to their own hearts. See Testimonies to Ministers, p.95,93.

As soon as the full meaning of this precious light begins to dawn in the chambers of the mind, one cannot but be startled with its beauty and simplicity and yet it is a most profound truth with many ramifications. One is filled with gratitude to God. As the merits of Christ are placed upon the believer, he is filled with light and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. "Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits, we appropriate the blessings of light and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Testimonies, Vol.5, p.744.

To the question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" the inspired answer is: "I will offer unto Him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." Psalm 116:12,17; Heb.13:15.

This is the 1888 message in a nutshell. It is the everlasting Gospel. "Through the sacrifices and offerings brought to the earthly sanctuary, the children of Israel were to lay hold upon the merits of a Saviour to come." Spiritual Gifts, Vol.1, p.161.

That there should have been any kind of prejudice against this message or any type of resistance to it may be attributed to the fact that "The proud heart strives to earn his salvation." Desire of Ages, p.300. This message of salvation only through the merits of Jesus Christ was sent to the church "that God's people might discern with astonishment the utter worthlessness

of creature merit to earn the wages of eternal life." Faith and Works, p.23,27.

The people had cherished the idea that they could do something to make themselves worthy of God's blessings: "We have long desired and tried to obtain the blessings of the covenant of grace but have not received them because we have cherished the idea that we could do something to make ourselves worthy of them." Faith and Works, p.36.

"Many are losing the right way, in consequence of thinking that they must climb to Heaven, that they must do something to MERIT the favour of God. This they can never accomplish." (1 S.M.368).

The true light is that "We have no merits except as they come through Jesus Christ." E.G. White, Bible Commentary, Vol.5, p.1128. This is the Bible truth on this subject that is so necessary to our present and

eternal welfare. This is the true light that was "in great measure" "shut away" from our people "by the action of our own brethren." See Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.235.

The Only Religion Of The Bible

Isn't it marvelous that in just "a few words" (Eph.3:3,4), we have, here, simply stated, the true religion, the only religion of the Bible:

"There is salvation for you but only through the merits of Jesus Christ. The grace of the Holy Spirit has been offered to you again and again.." Testimonies to Ministers, p.97.

To the question, What must I do to be saved? there is only one simple answer: "*Present your case before God pleading the MERITS of the blood shed for you upon Calvary's Cross.*"

And here is the reason: *"The MERITS of Christ's sacrifice are SUFFICIENT to present to the Father in your behalf."* *Faith and Works, p.106; Steps to Christ, p.36.*

Either we believe this or we don't. If we do, we have the approval of God and we are accepted in the Beloved and we may go on from grace to grace and from light to a greater light!

As this study progresses, we should be able to appreciate, more and more, as to why *"the MERITS of a crucified and risen Saviour are the FOUNDATION of the Christian's faith."* *The Great Controversy, p.73.* This is the "true light" the Reformers discovered and when they did, *"They cast themselves wholly upon the merits of the Saviour."* *Ibid, p.74.*

"Luther tried through works to obtain the favour of God; but he was not satisfied until a gleam of light from Heaven drove the darkness from his mind, and led him to trust, not in

works, but in the MERITS of the blood of Christ." *Spiritual Gifts*, p.120.

John Calvin had said, "O Father, we had devised for ourselves many useless follies, but You have placed Your word before me like a torch, and You have touched my heart, in order that I may hold in abomination all other merits save those of Jesus." *The Great Controversy*, p.221.

What a Spirit-filled prayer! It clearly defines the true religion, the only religion of the Bible!

By comparing statement with statement, as Scripture is explained by Scripture, (1 Cor.2:13), we should be able to discern and appreciate the preciousness of this truth. We will see that it is indeed "a most precious message" and that it is no "cunningly devised fable." 2 Peter 1:16. It will be seen that this simple truth is "The truth as it is in Jesus," even "the Third Angel's

message in verity. " Eph.4:21;
Testimonies to Ministers, p.92,93,97.

The Testimony of God Himself

Here it is, again, simply stated:

"We see in the midst of the throne
One bearing in hands and feet and
side the marks of the sufferings
endured to reconcile man to God. We
see a Father, infinite, dwelling in
light unapproachable, yet receiving
us to Himself through the MERITS of
His Son." E.G. White, Acts of the
Apostles, p.333.

"God will accept every one that comes
to Him trusting wholly in the MERITS
of a crucified and risen Saviour.
Then Love springs up in the heart.
There may be no ecstasy of feeling
but there is an abiding, peaceful
trust." Selected Messages, Vol.1,
p.354. This sums up for us the 1888
message of righteousness by faith
and let us not forget that

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"Righteousness is love and love is the light and the life of God." Mount of Blessing, p.18.

May God give us hearts to receive this testimony, for this is the precious truth that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare, that not one in one hundred understands for himself!

The righteousness of Christ accomplishes everything, for it imparts all the powers, all the grace, all the repentance, all the inclination, and all the pardon of sins. See Faith and Works, p.24. It is obtained only by appropriating to ourselves the all-sufficient merits of the Saviour. This is the truth as it is in Jesus, the true religion, the only religion of the Bible! The Father receives us to Himself through the merits of His Son! This is the Testimony of God Himself! 1 Cor.2:1,2; Gal.6:14.

Our Part and God's Part

All that the truth expects from us is that we receive it, believe it, and act upon it. "Implicit faith in the word of God is true humility, true self-surrender." Desire of Ages, p.535.

"When the Holy Spirit shall come into your hearts, to impress the truth into your souls, you will not let it go easily." Faith and Works, p.56.

"*Our part,*" the humble servant of the Lord wrote, "*is to lay hold by faith of the merits of Christ.*" Fundamentals of Christian Education, p.430. It is that simple. And if we do our part, then God will do His! As faith lays right hold upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, the Holy Spirit brings Christ's righteousness into the life and "*Christ's righteousness accomplishes everything.*" Faith and Works, pp.64-

66,27. This is what it means to
"believe on Him whom God has sent."
John 6:29.

What Must I do to be Saved?

Again the answer to this question is a very simple one: "*I must ever look toward Calvary, and with the simple faith of a little child I must REST in the MERITS of Christ, accepting His righteousness and believing in His mercy.*" Evangelism, p.185.

Little children do not have much pride of opinion of their own. Grown up ones are not so ready to learn. "*Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter the kingdom of God.*" Mark 10:15. This is spoken of as giving us a model and example as to how we are to come to the word of God and learn. Trusting in the merits of Christ with the simple faith of a little child in order to receive

pardon and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit is the true faith, the true religion, the only religion of the Bible, the "rock" upon which the soul is built up into a habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph.2:22.

This is the testimony which God gave to His servant, "a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the Third Angel's message" in verity. Testimonies to Ministers, p.93.

The next witnesses will confirm this:

"It has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered... Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His

divine person, TO HIS MERITS and to His changeless love for the human family. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in large measure." Testimonies to Ministers, pp.92,93.

Notice the emphasis again:

"The efficacy of the blood of Christ was to be presented to the people with freshness and power that their faith might lay hold upon ITS MERITS."

"Unless he makes it his life business to behold the uplifted Saviour and to ACCEPT His MERITS which it is his PRIVILEGE to CLAIM, the sinner can no more be saved than Peter could walk upon the water unless he kept his eyes fixed steadily upon Jesus." Testimonies to Ministers, p.93.

Could the Lord have made the matter of salvation more plain and simple? With the simple faith of a little child we are to rest in the merits of the Lamb that was slain! All that we need to do is to hold on to this testimony for it is the testimony of God Himself: "He receives us to Himself through the merits of His Son." Acts of the Apostles, p.333.

For, "*The merits of Christ blot out transgressions and clothe us with the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of Heaven.*" Evangelism, p.186.

In 1888 the people were invited to lay hold by faith of the merits of Christ in order to receive His righteousness which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God! See Testimonies to Ministers, p.92.

Court Week With Us

All the witnesses that we have heard, so far, are of one mind and of one accord, testifying to the saving truth that "the merits of Christ are *SUFFICIENT* to present to the Father in our behalf." Steps to Christ, p.36. In other words, it is court week with us and we are to "present our case before God pleading the merits of the blood shed for us upon Calvary's cross," saying, "Lord, I have no merit or goodness whereby I may claim salvation but I present before you the--MERITS of the--all-atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God. THIS IS MY ONLY PLEA." Faith and Works p.106.

To apply to the merits of the blood of Christ is not only our first work but it is the work of a lifetime. "We must DAILY APPLY to the MERITS of the blood of a crucified and risen

Saviour that we may become vessels fit for the Master's use." Faith and Works, p.86.

Habitually Dwelling Upon...

Now, let us take a look at the sure results of habitually dwelling upon Christ and His all-sufficient merits:

"Habitually dwelling upon Christ and His all-sufficient merits increases *faith, quickens the power of spiritual discernment, strengthens the desire to be like Him and brings an earnestness into prayer that makes it efficacious.*" Gospel Worker, p.166.

All these blessings are assured to those who habitually dwell upon Christ and His all-sufficient merits. This is how sinners show their appreciation of the merits of the spotless Lamb of God. And "As we *acknowledge before God our appreciation of Christ's merits,*

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fragrance is given to our intercessions." Our Father Cares, p.120. We are told that "Jesus has turned the merits of His sacrifice into prayer." E.G. White, Bible Commentary, Vol.7, p.914.

Jesus prays. He pleads His own merits before the Father in our behalf, claiming the gift of the Spirit that He may pour it upon us, and He succeeds. Ibid, 914. What, then, is our work, as well as the work of the ministers? *"Our part is to lay hold by faith of the merits of Christ." Fundamentals of Christian Education, p.430. "The work of the ministers is to hang their helpless souls upon the merits of Christ." Testimonies to Ministers, p.247.*

This is the only true faith which brings God's blessings to us:

"Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits we appropriate the blessings of light and peace and joy

in the Holy Spirit." Testimonies, Vol.5, p.744.

This is "the faith which works by love" to purify the soul. Gal.5:6. Therefore, "The only faith that will BENEFIT us is that which embraces Jesus as our personal Saviour: which appropriates His merits to ourselves." The Desire of Ages, p.347; Our Father Cares, p.192.

Are we getting a glimpse of what takes place when we "appropriate" the merits of Christ to ourselves? As we realize our great need, we may fall at the feet of Jesus and claim His merits. In doing so, our heavenly Father treats us, not as we deserve, but as Jesus deserves to be treated and loved! Behold! What manner of love! "Jesus was treated as we deserve that we might be treated as He deserves!" Desire of Ages, p.25. Is this not a mind-boggling truth! As the merits of Christ's infinite sacrifice are placed upon the believing sinner he becomes a member

of the Royal Family! Implicit faith in this truth is true humility, true self-surrender, and it brings infinite blessings! Desire of Ages, p.535.

Comparing Statement With Statement

Comparing statement with statement is the key to explain the messages given, just as Scripture is explained by Scripture. 2 Peter 1:20. The prophet Isaiah said: "*Here a little, there a little.*" Isaiah 28:10. It was the apostle Paul's manner of teaching, "*comparing spiritual things with spiritual things.*" 1 Cor.2:13. The Testimonies, like the Scriptures, are *not subject to any private interpretation:*

"The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the

messages given, as Scripture is explained by Scripture." Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.42.

Summary

Before we go any further, let us now make a brief summary of some of the testimonies we have heard, so far:

1. In 1888, "The eyes of the people needed to be directed to Jesus, to His divine Person, to HIS MERITS and to His changeless love for the human family."
2. *"There is salvation for you but only through the MERITS of Jesus Christ."*
3. *"The MERITS of Christ's sacrifice are SUFFICIENT to present to the Father in our behalf."*
4. *"Our part is to lay hold, by faith, of the MERITS of Christ."*

5. "The only faith that will benefit us is that which appropriates Christ's MERITS to ourselves."
6. "The MERITS of Christ are the foundation of the Christian's faith."
7. "We must daily apply to the MERITS of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour."
8. "The Father receives us to Himself through the MERITS of His Son."
9. "Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His MERITS, we appropriate the blessings of light and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
10. "You have no merits except as they come through Jesus Christ."

All these "witnesses" testify to the amazing fact that Jesus was treated as we deserve that we might be treated as He deserves! Thus, it is

our privilege to appropriate to ourselves the all-sufficient merits of a crucified and risen Saviour!

More Witnesses

Now we would like to introduce other witnesses in support of this precious truth! It is impossible to overemphasize it! The apostle Paul said, *"To write the same things to you, to me indeed it is not tedious, but for you it is safe!"* Phil.3:2. Is it not safe for us to habitually dwell upon Christ and His all-sufficient merits?

Living Faith

In the next following statement is the definition of what living faith is: *"How has it been with Christ's disciples in all ages of the world? Why, they have learned of Jesus; they*

have been in His school; they have been His students, and have learned the lessons of Christ in regard to the living connection that the soul has with God: That LIVING FAITH is essential to our salvation, that we should lay hold upon the MERITS of a crucified and risen Saviour" to bring Christ's righteousness into the life! Faith and Works, p.64,65,66.

This, dear reader, is what living faith is, and it is according to God's own idea of it, and not according to any of man's ideas! This is the teaching of righteousness according to righteousness and in it there is not one thread of human devising! Thank God! 1 Cor.2:1-5; Eph.4:21. And you cannot explain it! "You cannot explain this faith that lays right hold upon the MERITS of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour to bring Christ's righteousness into the life." Faith and Works, pp.65,66.

"Well then, what is our position? It must be a position of living faith." Faith and Works, p.65. "Living faith is essential for our salvation that we should lay hold upon the MERITS of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour." Faith and Works, p.64.

This is the true religion, the only religion of the Bible! This is the Bible truth on this subject that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare, that not one in one hundred understands for himself!

By relying solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ for his salvation, the sinner is elevated to the throne of God! "Christ places His own merits upon man and thus elevates him in the scales of moral value, with God." Our Father Cares, p.121. "This is the highest position to which man can attain." Acts of the Apostles, p.210. Thus "It is the privilege of every believer in Christ (who appropriates His merits to himself) to possess Christ's nature, a nature far above

that which Adam and Eve forfeited by transgression." The Upward Look, p.18.

Thus, "Clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and not your own righteousness, you will not depend upon what you can do or what you will do," for "Christ's righteousness accomplishes everything." Faith and Works, pp.65,66,27.

A Wonderful Work

"Jesus looked forward to the time when the Holy Spirit should come to do a wonderful work in and through HIS MERITS." Testimonies to Ministers, p.402.

"It is only the fragrance of the MERITS of the blood of Christ that will avail anything in our behalf." E.G. White, Bible Commentary, Vol.5, p.1122.

If there is anything in our world that should inspire enthusiasm, it is the fact that "*Jesus was treated as we deserve that we might be treated as He deserves.*" Desire of Ages, p.25; 2 Cor.5:21.

God forbid that we should glory save in the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour! Gal.6:14; Col.1:20. This is "*the hope that is set before us,*" in the Scriptures. And what a lively hope! Heb.6:18.

Soon one interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other: Christ and the necessity of appropriating His merits to ourselves!

Our Only Hope

"Those who live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and

sinfulness of humanity, and their only hope is in the *MERITS* of a *crucified and risen Saviour.*" The Great Controversy, p.471. We have nothing in ourselves of which to boast. Our only ground of hope is in trusting wholly in the all-sufficient merits of the blood that is of value beyond estimate!

Blessed Assurance

Mark these words with care: "Not one who trusts in the *MERITS* of Christ will be left to perish." Patriarchs and Prophets, p.432.

Not one!

Blessed assurance! "*When we rely upon the MERITS of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Redeemer, we shall receive all the help that we can desire.*" Ibid, 431. I love to repeat it: "*The MERITS of Christ's sacrifice are SUFFICIENT to present to the Father*

in our behalf." Steps to Christ,
p.36.

Who would dare to say, or to suggest, at this point, that it is not enough to rely solely upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour in order to be justified before God? This truth is pregnant with eternal results. Accepted, it brings the light that is to burn brightly into the soul and shine forth in good works, works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them! Eph.2:10.

Speaking With Great Authority

Now we will make room for more statements, statements that have an extremely important contribution to make in support of the truth as it is in Jesus. Eph.4:21. Our first witness, in this connection, speaks with great authority. We need to listen very carefully. May the Lord

cover us with a canopy of His holy angels that not one word may be lost:

"In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favour, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. But we are accepted through CHRIST'S MERITS ALONE; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are to be rewarded according to their works. *It is the fragrance of the MERITS of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us. These works, in and of themselves, have no merit. When we have done all that is possible for us to do, we are to count ourselves as unprofitable servants. Luke 17:10. We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures. Works without faith are dead, and faith without works is*

dead. Works will never save us; IT IS ONLY THE MERITS OF CHRIST THAT WILL AVAIL IN OUR BEHALF." E.G. White, Bible Commentary, Vol.5, p.1122; Faith and Works, p.48.

The two statements above contain "the whole counsel of God." Acts 20:27. It must be read again and again until the precious truth is assimilated. The statements contain elements of vital truths which are very illuminating in their influence and saving in their power! As we read these statements, we must not forget to pray that God will surround us with a canopy of angels for this is the precious light the enemy is working against ALL THE TIME! Faith and Works p.72.

Put up the Bars Behind You!

We need not be confused. *"When the Holy Spirit shall come into your hearts, to impress the truth into*

your souls, you will not let it go easily. You have gained such an experience in searching the Scriptures that every point is established. And it is important that you continually search the Scriptures." Faith and Works, p.56.

And, "If you have seen the truth of God, press right to the light and PUT UP THE BARS BEHIND YOU. We need to have an individual, personal experience. We need to be converted as did the Jews. If you see a little light, you are not to stand back and say, 'I will wait until my brethren have seen it.' If you do, you will go on in darkness." Faith and Works, p.78.

"Fear God, " that is, "You are to think for yourself. You are no longer to let other men do your thinking." E.G. White, This Day With God, p.31. And "Give glory to Him." Rev.14:7. We are to give credit to whom credit is due. "What have you that you did not receive? And if you did receive it,

why do you glory as though you did not receive it?" 1 Cor.4:7. "A man can receive nothing unless it be given him from God." John 3:27.

"From the smallest benefits up to the largest blessing, all flow through the one Channel--a superhuman mediation sprinkled with the blood that is of value beyond estimate because it was the life of God in His Son." Faith and Works, p.22.

"The creation belongs to God. The Lord could, by neglecting man, stop his breath at once. All that he is and all that he has pertains to God. The entire world is God's. Man's houses, his personal acquirements, whatever is valuable or brilliant, is God's own endowment. It is all His gift to be returned back to God in helping to cultivate the heart of man. The most splendid offerings may be laid upon the altar of God, and men will praise, exalt, and laud the giver because of his liberality. In what? 'All things come of Thee, and

of Thine own have we given Thee.'" 1
Chronicles 29:14; Faith and Works,
pp.22,23.

*We stand in favour before God, not
because of any merit in ourselves,
but because of our faith in the
merits of a crucified and risen
Saviour. Romans 5:9; 3:25;
Col.1:14,20.*

There is not a point...

Our next witnesses speak with even
greater authority.

*"There is not a point that needs to
be dwelt upon more earnestly,
repeated more frequently, or
established more firmly in the minds
of all than the impossibility of
fallen man meriting anything by his
own best good works." Faith and
Works, p.19.*

This is as strong a testimony as one witness can bear, right? However, this testimony does not even come close to what we are about to hear. Brace yourself. To my knowledge, the next testimony is likely to be the strongest, clearest, and the most solemn one mortal ears will ever hear regarding the utter worthlessness of creature merit to gain God's approval:

"If you would gather together everything that is good and holy and noble and lovely in man and then present the subject to the angels of God as acting a part in the salvation of the human soul, or in merit, the proposition would be rejected as TREASON." Faith and Works, p.24.

To those who cherish the idea that good works have, in and of themselves, any merit toward our salvation, (even the works that grace enables us to do), Jesus will say, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity." Matt.7:23.

Solemn words!

Could we possibly hear stronger language? Hardly! But there is more: "Standing in the presence of their Creator and looking upon the unsurpassed glory which enshrouds His person, they--the angels--are looking upon the lamb of God given from the foundation of the world to a life of humiliation, to be rejected of sinful men, to be despised, to be crucified. Who can measure the infinity of the sacrifice? And any works that man can render to God will be FAR LESS THAN NOTHINGNESS. The idea of doing anything to MERIT the grace of pardon is FALLACY from beginning to end." Faith and Works, p.24.

So then, "Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him." Ibid, p.20,27.

The Lord will reward the redeemed for the works which He Himself, by His grace, will have wrought in and through them but the merits of His sacrifice alone will avail anything in their behalf, for only the merits and righteousness of Christ will be recognized!

Not One Will Ever Perish While Doing This

"In all our helpless unworthiness, we must trust in the MERITS of the crucified and risen Saviour. None will ever perish while they do this." Patriarchs and Prophets, p.234.

None will ever perish while they do what? Trust in the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Praise the Lord!

And *"Through the VIRTUE of the MERITS of the blood of Christ we may*

stand unscathed amid the fire of temptation and trial." Faith and Works, pp.86,87. For, "Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits, we appropriate the blessings of light and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Testimonies to Ministers, Vol.5, p.744.

And "the gift of the Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant," "the gift that cannot be excelled" "brings all other blessings in its train." Acts of the Apostles, p.50; Desire of Ages, p.672.

"The Holy Spirit is to be to God's people as an encompassing wall of fire that the powers of hell shall not prevail against." Testimonies to Ministers, p.18.

The Intercession of Christ

He who spilled His own blood lives to plead its merits in our behalf. "The

intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting His DIVINE MERITS in the offering of Himself to the Father as our Substitute and Surety; for He ascended up on high to make atonement for our transgressions." Faith and Works, p.105.

"We are living in the great antitypical Day of Atonement, and it is now time that everyone should repent before God, confess his sins, and by living faith rest upon the MERITS of a crucified and living Saviour." Testimonies to Ministers, pp.224,225.

"Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. BY FAITH HE CAN BRING TO GOD THE MERITS OF CHRIST, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is

accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light." Faith and Works, p.101.

From Another Angle

Let us now look at the precious truth from another angle:

"Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed before they can claim His blessing. But these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to him as we

are--sinful, helpless, dependent."
Faith and Works, p.38.

A preacher once said that the Holy Spirit was promised to us on certain conditions such as "humility, confession, repentance, and earnest prayer." "And," he added, "we need to pray that the Lord will show us any other conditions so that we can be revived and receive the Holy Spirit." This teaching is not in harmony with the teachings of the Word of God. The Good News is that "The Lord specifies no conditions except that you hunger for His mercy, desire His counsel, and long for His love." Mount of Blessing, p.130; Matt.5:6.

These are the only conditions! And even these are the gift of God:

"You cannot have an inclination to come to Him unless He sets in motion influences and impresses His Spirit upon the human mind. And if there is a man on the face of the earth who has any inclination toward God, it is

because of the many influences that are set to work to bear upon his mind and heart. Those influences call for the allegiance to God and an appreciation of the great work done for him." Faith and Works, p.73.

"Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Ps.107:21. And "Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing." Verse 22.

If there is anything good or holy or noble in us, it is wholly attributable to the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour.

"He who will lay hold of Christ's righteousness need not wait one moment that he himself may blot out his own sins. He need not wait until he has made a suitable repentance before he may take hold of Christ's righteousness. We do not understand the matter of salvation. It is just

as simple as ABC. But we do not understand it." Faith and Works, pp.76,64.

"The plea that we may urge NOW and EVER is our utterly helpless condition." The Desire of Ages, p.317. And then, by living faith, we are to apply to the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour! "We must daily apply to the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour that we may become vessels fit for the Master's use." Faith and Works, p.87.

A Vitalizing Power

As we appropriate the merits of the Saviour to ourselves, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. See Selected Messages, Vol.1, p.354; Rom.5:5,9. And this love which is diffused through the whole being is a vitalizing power! Every vital part, the heart, the brain, the nerves, it touches with healing! It frees the

soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care that crush the life forces. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul a joy that nothing earthly can destroy, joy in the Holy Spirit, health-giving, life-giving joy! See Ministry of Healing, p.115.

A Sublime Truth

We cannot afford to forget this sublime truth:

It is only the merits of Christ that will avail anything in our behalf: *"Your birth, your reputation, your wealth, your talents, your virtues, your piety, you philanthropy, or anything else in you or connected with you, your connection with the church, the manner in which your brethren regard you, will be of no avail unless by living faith you lay*

hold upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour." Review and Herald, March 28, 1899.

"Faith is the gift of God but the power to exercise it is ours." Patriarchs and Prophets, p.431; John 1:7. Thus, faith is the hand by which the soul lays right hold upon the merits of the blood that is of value beyond estimate to bring Christ and His love into the heart!

"If we are conscious of our need, we should not devote all our powers to mourning over them. While we realize our helpless condition without Christ, we are not to yield to discouragement, but RELY upon the MERITS of a crucified and risen Saviour. Look and live. Not one who trusts in the merits of Christ will be left to perish. Patriarchs and Prophets, p.432.

We have no merits except as we appropriate to ourselves those of Jesus! AND WHAT MERITS ARE THESE!!!

Unless we, by faith, appropriate them to ourselves by claiming them, we cannot have the approval of God. But if we do, His merits are placed upon us and God loves us as He loves His only begotten Son! This is how faith is counted for righteousness!

In Conclusion

As we come before God, hour by hour, moment by moment, presenting our case before Him by pleading the merits of the blood that was shed for us upon Calvary's cross, we have the promise that we shall love Him with all our hearts and our neighbours as ourselves. As we learn to hold in abomination all other merits save those of Jesus, we shall see that there is not a negative in the law that proceeds out of the mouth of God! We shall realize that the ten commandments are exceedingly great and precious promises of their own fulfilment! 2 Cor.1:20.

Amen!

Extra Quotes

"John, while in vision, saw a company clothed with white robe. They were seen in the temple of God. This will be the result for all who will lay hold of the MERITS of Christ and wash their robes in His blood." Our Father Cares, p.339.

"Lay hold by faith of the MERITS of Christ and the soul-cleansing blood will be applied." Faith and Works, p.96.

"Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the MERITS of the Saviour. God would send every angel in Heaven to the aid of such one, rather than allow him to be overcome." Sons and Daughters of God, p.35.

Heaven is a ceaseless approaching unto God through the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ. *"Our part is to lay hold by faith of the merits of Christ."* Fundamentals of Christian Education, p.430. *"The work of the minister is to hang his helpless soul upon the merits of Christ."* Testimonies to Ministers, p.247.

"Centuries, ages, can never diminish the efficacy of this atoning sacrifice." Testimonies to Ministers, p.92.

Our Bank Account

Each one of us has a personal bank account with God. *"Only the merits and righteousness of Christ will be recognized. But this is placed in our account in rich fullness. We may draw upon God every moment. God has pledged Himself to open before us all*

the riches of His grace." Our Father Cares, p.149.

"The Redeemer, with a heart of unalterable love, still pleads His sacred blood in the sinner's behalf. The wounded hand, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead eloquently for fallen man, whose redemption was purchased at such an infinite cost. Oh, matchless condescension! Neither time nor events can lessen the efficacy of the atoning sacrifice. The MERITS of the slain Lamb are accepted by God today as a purifier from the defilement of sin." Testimonies, Vol.4, p.124.

"Faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin." Faith and Works, p.101.

"You cannot save yourself from the tempter's power, but he trembles and flees when the MERITS of that precious blood are urged." Testimonies, Vol.5, p.317.

"If human beings would open the windows of the soul heavenward in appreciation of the divine gifts, a flood of healing virtue would pour in. " Ministry of Healing, p.116.

"By virtue of HIS MERITS He gives us power to become members of the Royal family, children of the Heavenly King." Our Father Cares, p.120.

"The blood of Christ in an ever-abiding efficacy is our only hope, for through HIS MERITS alone we have pardon and peace." Our Father Cares, p.143.

"We are to be transformed through the MERITS of Christ." Our Father Cares, p.204.

"Through the MERITS of Christ we may find the APPROVAL of God." Our Father Cares, p.122.

Amen!

