



The Character of God

eNewsletter

Vol. 3, No 6

THE PILLARS OF THE FAITH AND THE CHARACTER OF GOD

STATE OF THE DEAD

“Death be not proud, though some have called thee

One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die.”

John Dunne¹

By Marilyn Campbell

Today we begin a series, showing how the message of God's character of love (COG) interfaces with the light of present church doctrine. Does it contradict or enhance that doctrine? Does the “new light” cause the old light to appear confusing, or, like a many-faceted diamond, does the old light shine with new luminescence in the “new light,” enabling us to see what



sciousness of our times is the view that humans never die. Death is merely a transition that is not death at all. Only the body dies and returns to the earth. But within each living person dwells something—a thinking, reasoning entity—that never dies but is

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we couldn't see before? This is a test of new light. Today we will look at the Adventist understanding of death and how it casts a light through the prism and helps that doctrine to shine in the light of a totally loving and benign God.

Natural Immortality

Embedded deeply into the public con-

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released at death and goes back to God or to an eternally burning hell. We call this “natural immortality.”

Though often attributed to the ancient Greeks, it began much farther back. Humans looked at the demise of cattle, dogs, and other animals, and reasoned that humans, so far above the animal kingdom in every way, surely must have a superior destiny to theirs.²

Semiramis, wife of Nimrod in the Assyrian or the early Babylonian era, gave this view a boost when she

declared the deceased Nimrod to be the sun god who had fathered her unborn child. Amazingly, the populace bought it, showing that the natural immortality view had gathered great public support already in that antique age.³

In fact, if we want to know when the world began to view death as “not death,” we need to go back to Eden, when Eve stood beside the tree of “death” and listened to the serpent say, “You shall not surely die.”⁴ Natural immortality has a long lineage indeed.

Since time began it has rolled along, picking up new theories, which quickly became facts in some minds, along the way. If natural immortality is true, if an eternal entity leaves the body at death and goes

somewhere, well, maybe reincarnation is also true. It has made possible the proliferation of ghost stories and other supernatural phenomena, appearing in the belief systems of both pagan and Christian communities.

If natural immortality is true, then eternally burning hellfire, ETs and UFOs, bigfoot, shadow people, cryptozoology and a plethora of other strange and mysterious things—that might be true as well. If natural immortality is true, it allows the enemy enormous latitude for deceiving us, with our “loved ones” returning and filling us with such foolishness and

causing us to believe it because “deceased old Aunt Mary would never lie.” Coupled with the erroneous understanding of death, the shape-shifting abilities of these demons give them a great advantage over us.

If natural immortality is true—then we are yet in our sins, for Jesus experienced what man experiences, and if there is no death, Jesus didn’t die; consequently, we have no savior.

More to the point, if natural immortality is true, then no power in the universe, even God’s power, can ever cause us to die. This limits

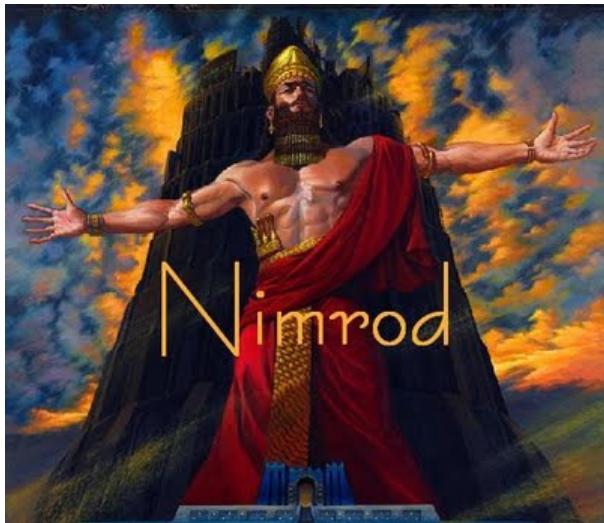
God’s omnipotence. The fires of destruction burn forever; because God cannot put them out. God cannot limit our life, because we have eternal life without Him.

The doctrine of natural immortality gives Satan a great advantage in his work of deceiving us.

The Millerite Contrarians

In the middle of the nineteenth century the disappointed Millerites stumbled onto the world stage with a determination to believe nothing but what could be substantiated in the word of God. At their Bible Conferences of 1848-1850 discussions were held in which George Storrs⁵ emerged as champion for a different theory of death—conditional immortality.

This view has had a long and noble history, for throughout time it has existed as the minority view of death. Under this definition God grants immortality to humans on certain conditions. In death humans merely go to sleep, awaiting God’s call to awaken them on resurrection morning. Can any subject be more essential for us to know than this? This view lacked the glamour and drama of natural im-



mortality, but the Millerites eventually added conditional immortality to their arsenal of truth. It was, after all, the clear teaching of Scrip-

ture.

Why It Matters

The Millerites did not know what a solid foundation they had laid for their spiritual heirs to walk in. Today the character of God message is swelling; new people are studying and embracing it every day. And the doctrine of death our spiritual predecessors gleaned from Scripture casts an amazing and harmonious light before it.

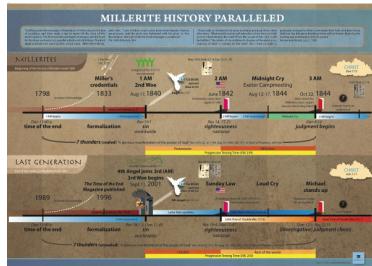
God is the Giver and Sustainer of life. His energy is exerted in this direction. All His efforts go into preserving us. He does not need to exercise His power to hurt us, punish us, discipline us, or to take away our life. No. God need not and does not work that way. Many years ago when Adventism was in its infancy, our spiritual ancestors saw that we are the building of God. We depend upon Him for every breath and every heartbeat. He actively builds, gives, and sustains life. When by their failure to receive Him, with everything that entails, and the ungrateful fight Him off, He hangs on as long as possible, but eventually the time comes when He must give them what they want. He



must back off. Without God to give and sustain life, it reverts back to its original form—nothingness. Satan, it should be remembered, has a field

day when God no longer can do His job of sustaining and ordering life. The belief in natural immortality constitutes a hurdle that non-Adventists must clear in coming to see God as He is.

I marvel that the forefathers of Adventism so long ago, when all the world believed in natural immortality, embraced a doctrine, true to



Scripture, that allowed the capstone of the gospel—the truth about His character of love—to be seen in such clarity. We must put our conditionalist glasses on to see that God gives life and all its attendant blessings to the world. When He is obliged to release His creation, to back off, to “stand down,”—when humans decide to unplug from Him, the Life Source, they fade away. There is no need for Him to proactively destroy them.

¹Quoted in *Metaphysical Lyrica & Poems of the Seventeenth Century* by Herbert J. C. Grierson, ed., Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1921.

²A. T. Jones, 1893 *General Conference Bulletin*.

³<http://www.ldolphin.org/semir.html>, <http://www.lasttrumpetministries.org/tracts/tract1.html>, <http://www.allaboutjesuschrist.org/origin-of-easter.htm>, <http://christiananswers.net/q-edn/edn-t020.html>.

⁴Genesis 3:4.

⁵<http://sogentlybroken.blogspot.com/2008/09/adventist-teaching-on-soul-sleep.html>

Quotations For Meditation

In Gethsemane “Christ was suffering under divine justice. He saw what justice meant” (DA 685-687).

Israel’s “sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, *the Jews has caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will* It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan....But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance that restraint is removed” (GC 35, emphasis supplied).

“It is Satan’s constant study to keep the minds of men occupied with those things which will prevent them from obtaining the knowledge of God” (5T 740).

“Holiness is agreement with God. By sin the image of God in man has been marred and well-nigh obliterated; it is the work of the gospel to restore that which has been lost, and we are to cooperate with the divine agency in this work. And how can we come into harmony with God, how shall we receive His likeness, unless we obtain a knowledge of Him. It is this knowledge that Christ came into the world to reveal unto us” (5T 743).

“The *whole spiritual life* is molded by our conceptions of God; if we cherish erroneous views of His character, our souls will sustain injury” (RH 1/14/1890 , emphasis supplied)).

Forgotten History

(Part 2, Conclusion)

By Gili Carstea

All these 120 years, some people cherished the “beginning” of the message, and for them it grew, developed and is now ready to unite with the “other” angel. They treasured its “advancing glory” and are ready to tell the church about the unsuspected glory of the 1888 message. But the prophecy is a little uncomfortable:

“The third angel's message will not be comprehended, the light which will lighten the earth with its glory will be called a false light, by those who refuse to walk in its advancing glory” (The 1888 EGW Materials, 673).

Today we have plenty of proof that the beginning of the 1888 message is still called “a false light.” Instead of walking in its advancing glory, the Remnant Church devised a shortcut to obtain victory over sin. We've been educated to imitate Christ's acts, words, manners, to “be like Him,” without first being “made like Him,” a temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But for us to be a final generation, another look at Christ is needed, simp-

ler but extremely profound in its implications:

“He who looks to Christ in simple, child-like faith, is made a *partaker of the divine nature* through the agency of the Holy Spirit . . . As Christ was glorified on the day of Pentecost, so He will again be glorified in the closing work of the gospel, when He shall prepare a people to stand the final test in the closing conflict of the great controversy” (HM, 1/11/1893, emphasis supplied).

His righteousness was the product of the union between the divine and human natures. It was His faith that the Father lives in Him, and without this indwelling He could do nothing. He said, as His first public words, in the most official place of His church, before the official leaders of His church, that He was a temple, *The Temple of God.*

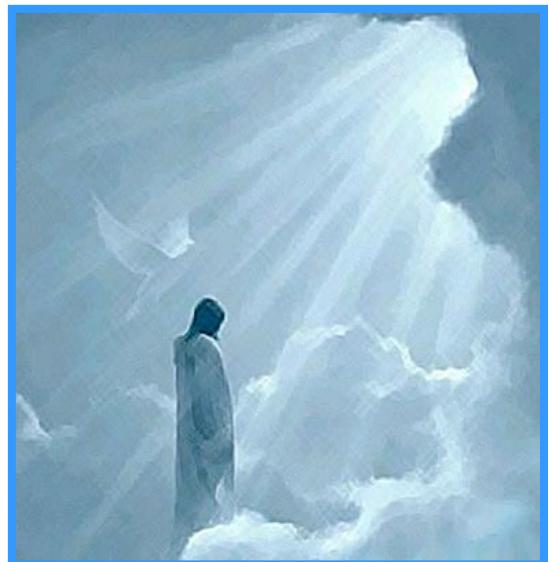
The saints of the final generation must demonstrate that same faith. They have “the

faith of Jesus,” the faith that God dwells in them (Rev.14:12), according to the new and eternal covenant (Jer. 31:31).

Why is the mystery of Christ still unproductive in the church at this late hour of history? Because we, the church, rejected God's initiative in 1888, and the light “intercepted” by our own leading brethren, was opposed all these years. The seventh trumpet will “begin to sound,” announcing the “finished” work of the mystery of God, when God's people understand their high calling of being temples for the indwelling of the Spirit of God, partakers of the divine nature, the Bride of Christ.

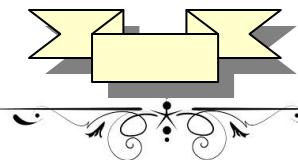
Then and only then “the temple in heaven” will be opened, for the world to see “the ark of His covenant” in a holy people made like unto their Brother (Revelation 11:19).

Then and only then the prophecy of Ezekiel will see its grand fulfillment: “And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among



the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes" (Ezekiel 36:23).

Then and only then the billions of worlds in heaven will sing with voices like thunder: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints" (Revelation 19:7-8).



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Jesus "was earnest, rather than vehement. . . . He was bringing to view the realities of the eternal world. In every theme God was revealed. Jesus sought to break the spell of infatuation which keeps men absorbed in earthly things. He placed the things of this life in their true relation, as subordinate to those of eternal interest; but He did not ignore their importance. He taught that heaven and earth are linked together and that a knowledge of divine truth prepares men better to perform the duties of everyday life" (DA 254).

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Then you will discern the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God (Proverbs 2:5).

Listen to the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel, for the LORD has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land (Hosea 4:1).

For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. (Hosea 6:6).

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! (Romans 11:33).

Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame (1 Corinthians 15:34).

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:5).

[S]o that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10).

[T]hat their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself (Colossians 2:2).

The Knowledge of God

By Floyd Philips

There are two very different ways of coming to this list of texts. And how we approach them, the spirit which motivates us while we read them, can make all the difference in the world in what we receive from them and from God. And while it is not so much a matter of right or wrong ways of looking at Scripture, not engaging Scripture the way God designed for us to do can make a huge difference in whether we actually encounter and experience the life of God, as we meditate on them, or whether we only find a list of words, facts and head knowledge. And as Paul pointed out, the letter can kill while it is the spirit that gives life.

Up Close and Personal

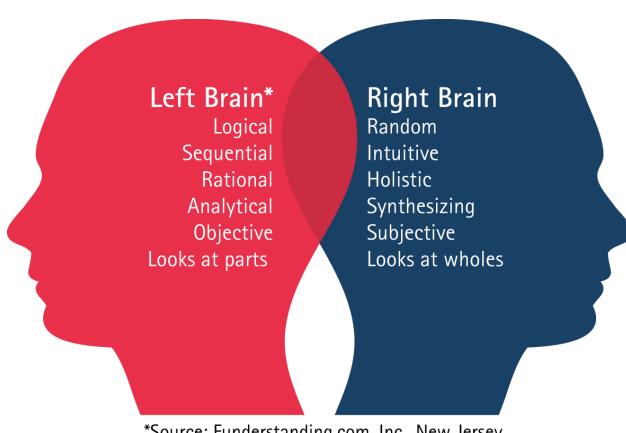
I am experiencing this difference even this morning as I write about this. The thought came to me a few days ago to compile this list of texts while I was searching for a passage using the phrase 'knowledge of God.' As I saw the rather short list that resulted from my search, I knew that very likely I would receive significant benefit from bringing them all together and taking a much closer look at them. It was a day or so later that I actually finished collecting them and

putting them into a document to consider more closely. But I was short on time so I let them sit there until I saw them again this morning and finally to sort through them, highlight the significant words and phrases to make them stand out more readily and begin contemplating about how they might complement each other and what I might learn from this. But as I did so it seemed to be a rather mechanical, intellectual exercise and not nearly as inspiring as I knew it should be. Of course I could probably use my mind to sort through the various words and ideas and piece together a good explanation of what it all could mean and maybe even write a paper or a talk on the subject. But that is not my desire or goal for I have learned that unless my heart is engaged in things such as this that the results can actually turn out to be counterproductive instead of a blessing. It might not be 'wrong' necessarily, but at the same time what is produced likely would not be very life-giving. And there is an over-abundance of lifeless expositions circulating today without the

Gratefully I stopped my study to take a shower. And while in the shower as is often the case, I began dialoging with God about whatever might be on my mind or whatever I am feeling at the moment. As I did so I felt my heart beginning to feel a deeper, intense desire to really know God more intimately as He has been inviting me to do for so long. It suddenly hit me that this was what was missing in my approach to these verses. I was only looking at them with my mind but my heart was not engaged or motivated by a deep hunger for God connected with my emotions. What I really need is to allow my heart and my emotional side to take the lead in my search for insights and answers while keeping my left brain intellectual skills as a supplement instead of the part in charge. I have learned that when I seek for this balance between the two sides of my makeup that the results are exponentially more satisfying, edifying and life-producing.

Spinning My Wheels

Interestingly the words that might result from my study of a list of verses like this may at times turn out to be very similar; yet the effect in my life can be radically different. I may or may not arrive at similar-sounding conclusions using my intellect or using my heart; but the impact of the study in my soul will be so far from doing it the other way that I am coming to realize the importance of always paying attention to the condition of my heart when it comes to the things of the spirit. I really don't



*Source: Funderstanding.com, Inc., New Jersey

need for me to add yet another one. But still, if I wanted to I could push through and produce such a document.

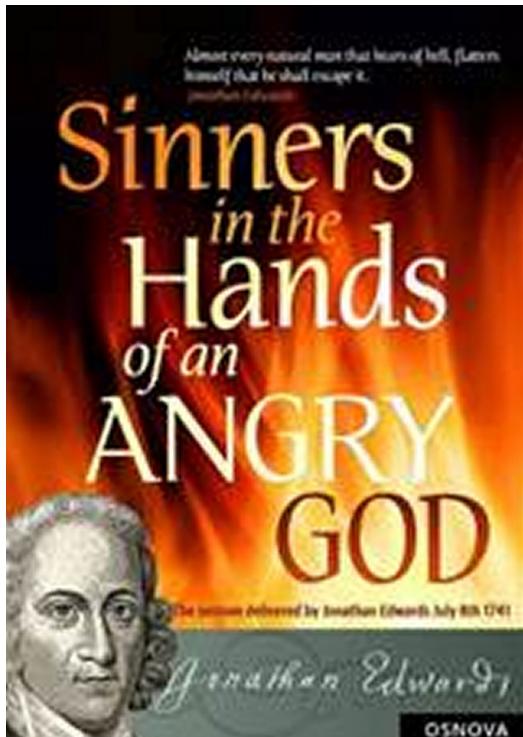
want to waste my time slogging through a study only to come up with a polished paper that may impress others but does not have real spiritual life resonating within it for me. I have spent too many years spinning my wheels in that kind of activity and I now want to allow my heart to catch up and really connect with the heart of God in the way I approach life and Scripture and spirituality today.

Ever since, many years ago, I was made aware that I had a spirit and that I needed to be more cognizant of the condition of my spirit, I have realized that this is a part of my awareness that is terribly dwarfed and in much need of more exercise and observation. That does not mean I did not have a spirit before, but simply that being ignorant of it I was easily manipulated by all sorts of other spirits as well as feeling very confused as to how to listen to the Spirit of God speaking to me. But as I have chosen to try to be more conscious and discerning of my own spirit, to my delight I began realizing that it has helped me immensely over time to hear more clearly the messages coming from the Spirit of God. The Word tells us that it is with our spirit that we communicate with God's Spirit, and Jesus said plainly that those who want to worship God must worship Him in spirit as well as in truth.

Despair

Over about half of my life now I have begun to see the extreme importance of coming to know God personally. My spiritual life up to that point was made up almost exclusively of complex answers,

doctrines, memorized facts and arguments for defending my brand of religion. Knowing God at best was just another formula that I was supposed to figure out how to practice, but it more likely did not show up in my thinking at all. I was raised by a father who insisted that the notion of having a relationship with Jesus was only a dangerous heresy that



was creeping into the church that needed to be resisted. Given that atmosphere it was no wonder that I had no incentive to come to know God on a personal level. The only kind of knowledge relating to God [that I wanted] was strictly informational sort of knowledge, and anything involving my feelings in regard to God was viewed as emotionalism that was to be carefully avoided. My religion was primarily a head-based religion like pretty much everyone around me practiced. I am sure there were some exceptions to that, but none that were able to

have much effect on my thick walls of defensive religious doctrines from years of careful training.

My View of God

Adding to my problem of not knowing God, my internally formed concept of God increasingly was always one of an angry deity far away who seemed constantly obsessed with watching my every move to find any excuse to condemn or punish me. I came to feel (though I was fearful to admit it consciously) that God's main objective seemed to be to find every excuse to keep me from getting into heaven while it was apparently my role to try to repent enough, get my act together enough and be obedient enough and be able to prove that all my sins had somehow been 'covered by the blood of the Lamb.' I faced a terribly confusing and complex system of rules, formulas and a narrow tightrope to balance myself in order to try to get past all the obstacles designed to screen out any who were not diligent enough to be saved. 'Watch and pray' was a quote often heard, but for me this meant 'watch out because God is waiting to get you in trouble' and 'pray without ceasing or God will be even more upset than He already is.'

This was how my heart saw God, so any notion of having a congenial relationship with Him was simply not on my radar, much less feeling attracted to Him. If anything I felt more like I was running a gauntlet trying to get inside the gates of heaven before God found some reason to slam the doors in

my face because of some obscure, forgotten sin that I had failed to confess from somewhere in my past.

There were many times during that period of my life that I actually wished and even asked for God to kill me quickly right after I had spent great effort trying to confess every sin and even any temptations I might ever encountered so that I wouldn't have to start all over again confessing even more that were sure to come. It was even murky in my mind where the line between temptation and sin lay and I recall many debates over just where that line might be crossed. So to play it safe I usually viewed nearly every temptation as a sin committed that needed confession, repentance and covering by the atoning (read 'appeasing') blood of Jesus just in case I didn't know the right answer as to where the line might have been crossed.

"The praise and thanksgiving from grateful hearts will ascend to God as a sweet oblation. . . . God desired that the whole life of His people should be a life of praise. . . . To praise God in fullness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 298-9).

And yet all of this enormous and continuous effort to keep God from feeling cross about me never seemed to bring any relief. No matter how much I confessed and begged for forgiveness, I never could feel certain that He actually had let go of His ill feelings over all of my petty or not so petty trans-



gressions. In fact, during those many years of living in constant internal torment and massive religious efforts to be perfect, the only results I found making changes in me was that I was feeling more and more bitter and angry and rebellious while at the same time feeling more and more guilty and even hopeless. I now can see what was happening and why, but at the time I had no clue as to why it seemed so hard for me to be saved by being a good person.

Sin Defined

One major problem was that my concept of how God felt about me was both shaped and in turn reinforced faulty assumed definitions for nearly every religious term I used. I struggled to even know the definition of the word "sin," since it seemed that sin was at the center of my problem with God. I was assured repeatedly that sin was transgressing the law of God—breaking

the rules. But with Jesus saying that even feelings of anger or lust were just as bad as killing or raping, I had little hope of ever being free of guilt as my own fleshly desires were very hard to control as far as my imagination was concerned. With teenage levels of hormones surging through my body making me desire sexual pleasure, and yet believing that all of those feelings were terribly sinful and offensive to God, it was still impossible to avoid feeling tempted to want things associated with pleasure.

As my increasingly repressed rage deepened and my lusts seemed to flaunt all attempts to suppress them, I felt at times that death or just giving up on God just might be preferable to the constant turmoil from the fear and torture of soul that increasingly dominated my brain every waking minute. I came to the point at times of simply throwing out religion altogether and plunging into as many sinful pleasures as I could in order to maybe figure out a way to come back to God from that direction.

Maybe then I might find the peace that I heard about in stories from others. But fear of dying before I returned to God always prevented me from taking that route, for I was certain from all of my religious instruction that if I was lost that God was waiting with a lake of fire fueled by sulfur and brimstone to torture me if I chose to sin and did not have them all 'covered with the blood' before my time was up.

God, a Monster?

With this vivid picture of a God who I now realize was more like a sick abuser or even a monster than anything like Jesus, all these verses that speak of having a knowledge of God simply had little attraction or help for me. I felt I already knew enough about God to know that I didn't like what I knew already. So why would I want to know more of the same?

I wish I could say that one day I had a dramatic breakthrough, a 'Saul of Tarsus' experience where God suddenly confronted me with the truth and that after that my life was dramatically changed. I used to love hearing stories like that, but for me they seem to remain stories that happen to other people. God's efforts to change my opinion about Him have been long and seemingly very slow. As a result I still struggle to know for sure if I am converted, if I am really in a saving relationship with Him or if I am deep inside still a rebel that is just doing an even better job of keeping up appearances. It seems that the more cognizant I become of the real truth about God and the way He



designed reality to exist in His universe, the more out of harmony I find my heart to be with that

frightening society of purity and joy.

Knowing God

I know that it is natural to feel even more despairing as I come closer and closer to knowing God personally, and the only hope I really have is to keep focusing on discovering and focusing on the truth about Him that has already radically changed my feelings about Him from what I had as a teenager and beyond. But still, the more I see how good and consistent and loving and accepting He is the more rotten I see my own heart. At the same time I do see glimmers of hope in how my own life and my relationships with others are slowly beginning to improve as a result of having my internal picture of Him replaced with fresh revelations that He is nothing like what I grew up thinking about Him.

The Knowledge of God

It is one thing to swap out intellectual beliefs or doctrines about the nature of God with new ones; it is entirely another thing to convince my heart that all these stimulating truths are actually real and believable. After so many years of living in constant fear of a vengeful God waiting to punish any who don't live up to His impossibly high standards of conduct and belief, I find it very slow and even unpredictable as to how to change my gut-level feelings and reactions whenever I think about God. But again, I see changes appearing in ways that are unexpected at times and I am reminded that I really have little control over what my heart believes except to make better choices as to the content of what flows into my imagination on a daily basis.

Over the past twenty years or so I see that my desire to know God has increased greatly. At times I have felt an awareness of His presence with a sweetness that I never before imagined I could feel. Increasingly He has pushed me to challenge every assumption I ever had about Him along with my perceptions of the meaning of every religious word and phrase that has shaped my life. As I have done so, I find to my utter amazement that almost without exception everything I assumed about Him and everything I thought about the meaning of



religious words has all been wrong. And the wonderful thing is that all of these mistaken ideas now being expelled were the roots of all my fear and despair much of my life, not the true God that I am now finally beginning to discover myself. Yet I still feel a very long ways off from having the solid sense of loyalty and affection for Him at the heart level that I know I need and desire.

Reinterpretation Leads to Rest

Religion equipped me heavily with a knowledge of Scripture for which I am grateful. And although for many years that library of knowledge had little impact to help me come to love God, it now is providing an enormous advantage as the Holy Spirit taps into my internal familiarity with the Word to reinterpret everything I thought I knew in the past. As I have opened my mind and allowed the Spirit of God to challenge and slowly heal the enormous damage in my heart, I am starting to feel awakenings inside that I never thought possible most of my life. As I discover more and more fabulous things about God's character and disposition that were hidden from me all these years, I now not only see a beautiful consistency that I could never discern before but my heart increasingly desires to interact with this God that I never knew before.

So, having said all of this, I want to allow my heart to take the lead in listening to the Spirit of God resonating with the spirit in myself as I contemplate and soak in these passages that can lead me closer to enjoying the intimacy with the heart of God that I was designed from the beginning to experience. I can't make my heart love and appreciate God, but I can keep revealing myself intentionally to all things bright and beautiful, all evidences of God's passionate love for me, as well as continuing my efforts to release all the resistance built up over many years against letting God love me.

Worship

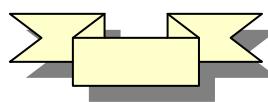
I came across a definition for the word 'worship' last night that really pulled together what God has been seeking to show me over recent years. This word *worship* that seems so misunderstood in all the discussions and controversies surrounding it, actually is a contraction from two very old English words: "worth" and the suffix "ship." I have discovered in Revelation that the *worth* part of this word entails coming to appreciate how much God is actually *worth trusting* as we finally begin to see the real truth about what He is like. When I take a fresh look at the "worth-ship" of God based on how good He is, especially in contrast with what I assumed about Him for much of my life, then having faith in Him becomes far easier than I ever imagined. An old cliché that previously seemed so trite is finally making sense to my heart—to know Him is to love Him.

I could never find it in my heart to love God for many years because I just couldn't produce love on demand, and everything that religion taught me revolved around demands to love God—or else. But the more clearly I see that this is not the case at all, and that even the 'or else' does not emanate from God but rather from the natural effects of withdrawing from His life-giving love, I now start to feel the attraction that Jesus talked about when He said that if He was lifted up He would draw everyone to Himself. I am finally starting to feel that drawing and I keep choosing to respond to it as much as I can.

In Conclusion

One of the most important revelations Jesus ever shared was when He talked about the true definition of eternal life—that elusive goal that seemed so impossible most of my life. "*This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent*" (John 17:3). Since this is reality according to Jesus, then what I want to focus on is getting to know both God and Jesus as fast as my heart can handle it. This is why I find this exercise of pondering these verses on the knowledge of God so relevant and life-giving. For if they can lead me to know God even more intimately and can show me how to do that more effectively and efficiently, then I need to meditate on them day and night and allow the truths I find in them to enhance my response to the drawing of Jesus on my heart.

The deep desire of my heart is eloquently expressed in one of my all-time favorite worship songs written by Steve Green. These words express so clearly the deepest cravings of my heart that it is often impossible for me to sing them without my emotions shutting down my ability to sing out loud. The lyrics express what my soul longs to know ever more intently. I will close with the chorus of this song.



Oh, I want to know You more!

Deep within my soul I want to know You,

Oh, I want to know You.

To feel Your Heart and know Your Mind, looking in Your eyes stirs up within me, cries that say I want to know You.

Oh, I want to know You more.

Oh, I want to know You more.



The foolish virgins "do not know God. They have not studied His character; they have not held communion with Him" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 411).

"Graciously the Lord responded [to Moses], 'I have pardoned according to thy word.' And then He imparted to Moses, in the form of a prophecy, a knowledge of His purpose concerning the final triumph of Israel. 'As truly as I live,' He declared, 'all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.' . . . God's glory, His character, His merciful kindness and tender love—that which Moses had pleaded in behalf of Israel—were to be revealed to all mankind. And this promise of Jehovah was made doubly sure; it was confirmed by an oath. As surely as God lives and reigns, His glory should be declared 'among the heathen, His wonders among all people.' Psalm 96:3.

"It was concerning the future fulfillment of this prophecy that Isaiah had heard the shining seraphim singing before the throne, 'The whole earth is full of His glory.' Isaiah 6:3. The prophet, confident of the certainty of these words, himself afterward boldly declared of those who were bowing down to images of wood and stone, 'They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.' Isaiah 35:2" (PK 313).



THE AFRICA MISSION

By James Ongiri

I traveled on October 3, 2013 to Uganda for a five day seminar which was held in Mukono town a short distance from Kampala City, as organized by an independent Adventist group. I thought that I was to meet my old friends whom I had served between 1992 and 1996 but found new people and few in number but humble, loving and teachable.

Among them was an elderly lady who claims to be a pastor/prophetess of the Redeemed House of God of Israel. She had built a church structure on her homestead some years back but when she started to preach on the true Sabbath, she was left alone and then rented that place of worship to a Pentecostal church which also rejected her because of her teachings. For that reason she told them to leave that structure until God brings the right people to worship there.

The leader of that group visited her a few weeks before my trip and after sharing with her she requested him to accept to hold meetings in that house and so that is where we held our meeting. As I introduced my presentation on the character of

God she confessed that this is the message that she has never heard of in her many years of service. She wanted all of it and did not want to waste time.

Gentleman From Uganda

Another person who was present was a gentleman from DRC - Congo who is a refugee in Uganda. He was trying to follow with mixed success because of language problem, for in their country they speak in French. The whole group would confess after every presentation that that was the real message, and at the end of everything on Sabbath evening I gave them a few books I had carried with me: *Light On the Dark Side of God*, 10 copies; *As He Is*, two copies. They were very happy and grateful and asked if they would get more books and requested for DVDs/CDs with the same message and thanked so much those who provided the books.

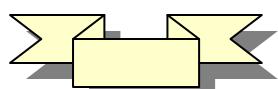
On Sunday I was to have studies with that self-styled prophetess and then go to Kampala to visit others but my trip was cut short because of an urgent call to help a dying American missionary and his family working in Masai land, so I

left Uganda on Sunday morning, but when reaching home that person had died in Migori hospital.

That is all brethren, and you can view the photos attached below. Books and DVDs/CDs are very much needed.



Contact Nicola Straub
Nicola.Straub@YahooDOTcom



THE PERU MISSION

by Sandy Workman

The little band here in Alaska has been very prayerful, for the last few months, as we have been considering a trip to South America to visit and encourage the different believers situated in several different countries. As the doors keep opening in amazing ways we feel that we simply have to go forward in faith and begin the process of purchasing tickets.

The best route, leaving right after Camp Idaho in August, will cost us around \$820-\$840 per person (multiple-destinations). This price is the best we have found and is very good considering the prices we have paid in the past. As of right now there are four adults that are for sure planning on traveling: Isaac Workman, Hermelinda Tol, Araceli Heston, myself and the three children of Living Waters ("not many wise men... not many mighty... not many noble are



called...but God hath chosen the weak....**that no flesh shall glory in His presence").**

We will be holding meetings in the homes of non-Adventist and Adventist groups. We are looking to take literature with us (such as *The Great Controversy*, *Steps to Christ* and *Patriarchs and Prophets*, accord-

ing to what Spirit of Prophecy highly recommends), and it is my desire to have the character of God book I am currently working on in Spanish (as a United Brethren Publication) to take along with us.

The midnight watch is fast approaching and the signs of the times tell us that the time is at hand. The passages from place to place that are now open will soon be hedged up and it will be more difficult than we can now imagine. We are told that we must look our work fairly in the face and move forward as fast as possible as God clears the way. And clearing the way He is. I can only speak for myself but as I saw more and more

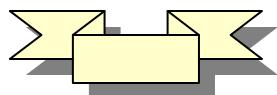
INSPIRATION

that this trip was necessary not one part of my being had any desire to go. As strange as that may sound I am being honest. After the Amazon I have not had the desire to go anywhere! About two weeks ago I began to pray earnestly about my condition, that God would make it known if this was from Him or not. And as I prayed a request came to my mind—to ask God for more love for the people. Well, God has answered to be sure, and although I cannot describe it, He is so very good. Even a week ago intense fear would fill me as I even thought about the trip and I realized that I really needed to pray even more than I had been praying. But I praise the Lord for His goodness towards the children of men. Not only has there been a heart change but He has even confirmed it with more open doors that have arisen in Colombia since yesterday and then, just last night, more amazing news from Mama T and a new group that has practically formed over night. I thank God that He knows exactly how to motivate us.

Opportunity

Living Waters would like to extend to each one of you the opportunity to be a part of this very important mission through prayer and financial support. As we are a small group we will need the help of the world field. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Sandy K. Workman
sandyktolATgmailDOTcom
<http://www.livingwatersadventministries.com/index.html>



Vol. 3, No 6

Hello Marilyn,

I emailed you several months ago about study guides on the topic of God's character. You mentioned you'd place a call for study guides in the newsletter but I'd need to ask you to do it so you wouldn't forget. Well, I forgot to ask you, which, as you said, is a 'sure sign of age creeping up'—but not on you! On me! Lol! So would you please add this to your next newsletter? Thank you. (Needless to say, I forgot. Ed.)

On Another Note

On another note, as you may remember I'm a close friend of someone who ordered a case of books from you some time ago. We love having them on hand to share!

Well, I wanted to share a story with you about your book. Quite some time ago I was visiting my daughter who is attending one of our schools of higher learning, and had the opportunity to spend some time with her best friend, a young man who has become very dear to our family over the years. I knew he was struggling spiritually so I asked him about his walk with God. He was honest with me as I listened to his answers. I shared with him what I'd been learning, and his interest was piqued.

Upon my return home I sent a copy of *Light On The Dark Side* (now *Light Through the Darkness: A*

Vindication of God) down to him with his promise that he would indeed read it. He kept his promise and every so often in the last few months he would text me to tell me how much he was enjoying your book.

Last night I had an amazing conversation with him. He thanked me so much for sharing the book with him. He said for the first time ever he actually feels 'happy.' He had stopped going to church a couple years ago until, he said, he could go with the right motivation, his own desire. He told me he now wants to go to church; he no longer feels like God is far away, that God is going to cause bad things to happen to him if he doesn't measure up. He has assurance of salvation and he's finding it easy to turn over the stressors of his life to God. As he said, "It's not my



problem! I look to see how God will work it out." He's experiencing that "peace that passes all understanding."

all was so logical for him. He has found himself sharing what he's learning with his co-workers and mentioned to me that he had several people he was going to share the book with. I told him to hang onto his copy and sent him four more books. He's given them all away and is now wanting more. I'd like to know how I can get him a few more copies, or how he could access them. Is the book available to order online somewhere? I live in Canada and he in California, so it's a ways to ship, too.

Could you tell me what might be his best plan of action in securing more books? It's so exciting to see the shift in him. I told him God is going to use him to reach his family with this message. So cool.....

Hi Marilyn -

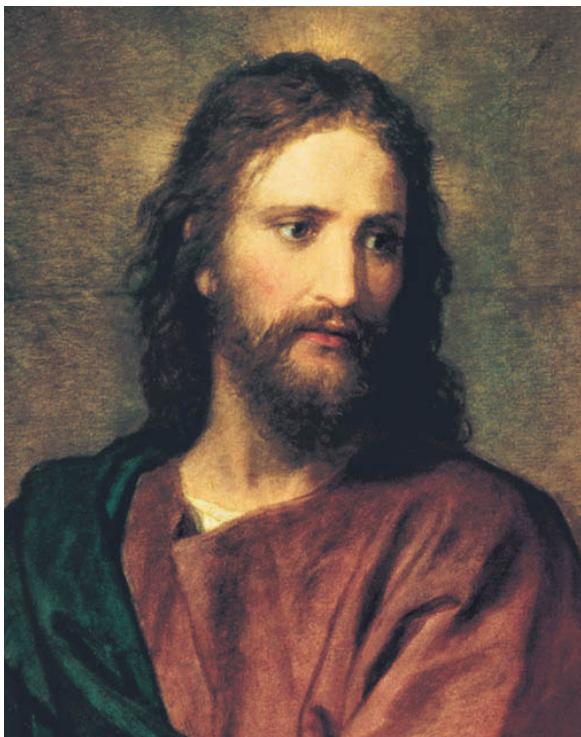
Thanks for getting back to me so quickly. What I was after was a set of Bible study guides. Long story short, I had an occasion to talk to a woman from North Carolina over the phone and in the course of the conversation I ended up offering to study the Bible with her. We began meeting weekly over the phone, then went to Skype. I'm in British Columbia so we've had to juggle the three hour time difference. But we studied together along with her husband (she's Catholic; he's Jewish), and later both went to their local church and were baptized just over a year ago now. They've wanted to continue studying so we've been keeping in contact each week, and sometime soon we're hoping we can

actually meet in person. Lol! But I've been wanting to go through an organized study of the character of God with them. There is so much its hard to know where to begin. I'd like to find a systematic set of studies that lay a solid groundwork then take the person to a full understanding of what we know to this point. It would be great if they pointed out the healing and restorative view of the gospel, the non-violence of God, righteousness by faith, etc. I've been working to put something together but I almost feel like I need to go into hibernation with no interruptions to fully focus on this task. I feel this study is absolutely imperative as it will keep people, es-

light and His agape love. So far, I haven't found any guides that are simple, question and Bible answer format, that would be easy to study with someone. . . [Certain ones] have some study guides on their web site, but they are more for personal study, having lengthy explanations. I suppose they could be adapted, but still, they are not as thorough as I envision. I may just have to knuckle under, take a deep breath and prayerfully really apply myself.

I so agree with you! I totally believe this is the message that will lighten the whole world with His glory. This is the message that will usher in the loud cry and the closing events. I suspect this message that is lighting up in little companies all over the world, is the reason for the enemy's counterattack—the latest call for unity between Catholicism and Protestants, Tony Palmer's messages, etc. From our little church here the light is going forth, spreading to everyone who will listen. We feel your book is the best book for sharing.

Yes, my young friend is an Adventist and I've sent him your SDA supplement to *Light on the Dark Side* via email. I'll share your suggestions with him. I'm also excited to go through these resources myself.



pecially people new in the faith, from becoming legalistic with all the do's and don'ts, and get them growing in the right direction, their eyes fixed on Jesus and who He is and thus by beholding becoming changed into the same likeness. But also, for people established in their faith, this study would take them out from under the heavy bondage of following a false god into the true, freeing gospel of God's

Hi Marilyn,

This weekend I drove up to be with my family for a funeral. I brought a couple of *Light On The Dark Side*, and sat up with my father till 12:30 am discussing God's character and sharing with him. He's wanting to discuss further this evening with the family. My step-mom and sister will be with us. I'm praying that their minds will be open to the logic and the truth in the matter. I suggested that even though we don't come right out and say it in these words, the essence of our current understanding is "love God and turn to Him, or in the end He's going to have to kill you!" It doesn't matter how you slice it, even if you say He does it in loving mercy, the outcome is still the same—love Him or He will kill you in the end. My dad piped up and said, "Well that's what the papacy does, and God wouldn't do that." Thank you! He got that! Lol! But he's hung up on the quote where Ellen White says that all will meet their punishment—some will suffer a short time and some a little longer and Satan the longest still because the sins of

the saved are placed on him. The statement ends with something like, "At last all the wicked are destroyed in the fire." But, as I looked more closely at the statement, she never said that the wicked are suffering "in the fire"—only that they are suffering and destroyed and Satan is the last to be destroyed. Then she mentions the "cleansing fire" that destroys the wicked.

Anyway, I'm going through your SDA Supplement this morning. I find it a valuable resource. The more I share, the more it all makes such perfect sense, in keeping with God's righteous character. But how darkened our understandings are, how slow to see the truth through the darkness that beclouds our minds.

The Lord anoint my heart and my mind as I continue to share. And the Lord continue to bless you....

Love and Best Wishes,
Lorelei
lorelei7ATtelusDOTnet



Two Comments:

1) I am taking this way of letting the field know about this request for study guides. They should emphasize the character of God and be appropriate to study with those who are unfamiliar with our doctrines. Please contact Lorelei directly, and please keep me in the loop because requests such as this come in from time to time, and I'd like to know who to go to, to fulfill them.

2) About the SOP quotation that Satan is the last of the lost to fall, this quotation has troubled me, too, for years. It didn't seem to fit in with the SOP/Biblical data that we were all finding regarding the character of God message. But then, when I started to understand some of the details regarding the very, very end events, it fit perfectly. I have answered this question in the SOP Supplement to *Light Through the Darkness* (Objection 7), and this supplement in digital form is available free to whoever wants it. I have not had time yet to change the version that is currently on site. If you want it, just email me.



The Project

by Marilyn Campbell

These have been an exciting two months, with more ups and downs than a roller coaster at a roadside amusement park.

Plans for the future include making a short animated advertisement for my COG YouTube channel, and I have just learned that Christopher Leach is coming on board to do animations. Praise the Lord! YouTube's advertising says they will play the ad free of charge to targeted members.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Don White of British Columbia for helping set up the YouTube channel. He is also in the process of setting up a Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/yonargi>) and a Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/yonargi>). I think he's going to update the websites, too, and he does it with such style and ease. He tells me it's a work in progress. Thank you, Don.

I received a request to give the message in smaller, bite-sized segments. Therefore, we are

planning a series of videos, which we will load onto the COG channel, with such topics as "The Wrath of God," "The Wars of Israel," "The Graciousness of God," "The Fall of Jericho," "God: Ultimate Blame-taker For the Universe," "The Great Conflict of the Ages," "Alternate End Game," "The Final Fire," and others as we think of them. This will allow opportunity to give the message in fullness, but in smaller segments that may be more easily understood and that the full video didn't allow.



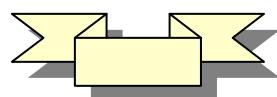
You may be interested in the handout made at the suggestion of a reader (Thank you, Lorrie!) which gives the basic foundation of the message in a tri-fold. (Attached) You can have them professionally printed as colorful card stock or as number ten paper on your own home printer. There is enough space left on the back for a rubber stamp containing contact

information for your church or group. We expect to have many of these on a variety of subjects in the future for you to print and distribute.

Wish List

We still need plain video of people discussing among themselves the question: Why does God speak this way? Why does He insist upon confusing us by saying He did what He didn't really do? How conclusive is this? Could be a couple of neighbors talking over the back fence, a husband/wife duo talking in their living room, a Bible discussion group, etc. Maybe we could use some animation to illustrate a point they are making. Any volunteers?

Another very real need right now is finding a good, male, radio voice to do the narrations. This was a problem during the making of *A New Look at the Character of God*, and I finally decided to do the narration myself, but it wasn't ideal. If you or someone you know meets that description ("a good, male, radio voice"), please get in touch. We would welcome a volunteer male to do all our narrating in the future plus re-recording the first video.



Caribbean Mission

By "Linda Baker"

I'm going to try to reconstruct the many notices that Linda has sent over the past two months.

First there were Demetrius Leach's excellent response to Tony Palmer.

You can find his site at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/AmazingGospelTruth/videos>

Latest video, Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gd4z21iG2Ks>

Latest Video, Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21iaRdoooTg>

Responses by the Loud Cry Team: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0x9S6bWlk>

Remember to Like and to Subscribe to all these YouTube endeavors. Sorry if I left anything out.

Camp meeting season is right upon us, and you'll want to reserve your place as soon as possible. On the next page is a registration form for the Guyana Camp Meeting on July 4 through July 12, 2014. Here are Linda's instructions for the form:

"To register please fill out information on the form, press file, then print, then set printer to adobe pdf, choose location to save and lastly email the saved pdf with camp information to the registration email. For further information contact the phone numbers or email address on the flyer."

Linda Baker
jlmissionATfrontierDOTcom

P.S. I couldn't get the .pdf file to attach. Therefore, if you are interested in attending the Guyana Camp Meeting, get in touch with Linda by email, and have her send you the form. Guyana, as I understand it, is on the northernmost border of South America.

"It is no part of Christ's mission to compel men to receive Him. It is Satan, and men actuated by his spirit, that seek to compel the conscience. Under a pretense of zeal for righteousness, men who are confederate with evil angels bring suffering upon their fellow men, in order to convert them to their ideas of religion; but Christ is ever showing mercy, ever seeking to win by the revealing of His love. He can admit no rival in the soul, nor accept of partial service; but He desires only voluntary service, the willing surrender of the heart under the constraint of love. There can be no more conclusive evidence that we possess the spirit of Satan than the disposition to hurt and destroy those who do not appreciate our work, or who act contrary to our ideas" (DA 487).