TIMELY GREETINGS

— The Only Peace of Mind —

Vol. 1 Nos 1,2

THE WAY BACK TO EDEN

ONLY TWO WAYS

OPENING PRAYER THOUGHT

I shall read from The Mount of Blessing, page 147, paragraphs 1 to 3. These paragraphs are based on the scripture, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God."

M. B., p. 147 – "The people who listened to the words of Christ, were still anxiously watching for some announcement of the earthly kingdom. While Jesus was opening to them the treasures of heaven, the question uppermost in many minds was, How will a connection with Him advance our prospects in the world? Jesus shows that in making the things of the world their supreme anxiety, they were like the heathen nations about them, living as if there were no God, whose tender care is over His creatures.

"…'Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'… Open your hearts to receive this kingdom, and make its service your highest interest. Though it is a spiritual kingdom, fear not that your needs for this life will be uncared for. If you give yourself to God's service, He who has all power in heaven and earth will provide for your needs.

"Jesus does not release us from the necessity of effort, but He teaches that we are to make Him first and last and best in everything. We are to engage in no business, follow no pursuit, seek no pleasure, that would hinder the outworking of His righteousness in our character and life. Whatever we do, is to be done heartily, as unto the Lord."

Let us now kneel and pray that we may make the advancement of the Kingdom our highest interest; that we may let no pursuit interfere with our wholeheartedly serving the Lord; and wholeheartedly believe that the Lord will provide for all our needs. Only then we shall not fear the future.

THE WAY BACK TO EDEN

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY V.T. HOUTEFF
MINISTER OF DAVIDIAN 7TH-DAY ADVENTISTS
SABBATH, AUGUST 3, 1946
MT. CARMEL CHAPEL
WACO, TEXAS

Gen. 3:17 – "And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life."

After Adam fell into sin, what did the Lord say to him? – "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, hast done what you ought not, and hast eaten of the fruit which I forbade you to eat, for this cause, cursed is the ground, not against you, but for your sake."

Error, being the opposite of Truth, would have said, "Blessed is the ground for thy sake." And instead of saying, "In sorrow shalt thou eat all the days of thy life," Error would have said, "In pleasure shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." In other words, while God pronounces a curse, Satan under the same circumstances pronounces a blessing. So it is that the world, naturally being tuned to Satan's speech, expects to live in pleasure all its days. Nevertheless, it is having plenty of sorrow. Plenty of it.

Verse 18 – "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field."

The Devil, of course, would have said, "Roses and flowers shall it bring unto thee." And rather than commanding, "Thou shalt eat the herbs of the field," he would have said "Thou shalt eat of everything you find in the field." True, he does not say so in a book, but he does say it in the hearts of all living, and they zealously obey his voice.

Verse 19 – "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Satan would have said: "In pleasure shalt thou eat bread until, in the process of evolution, thou become as God; for out of an insignificant atom wert thou taken, and unto a mighty God shalt thou evolve if thou continue on and on.

What did God say, though? – "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread all the days of thy life; that is, for your own sake you are now to have hardship in making a living, and you might just as well reconcile yourself to it." Although such was not man's lot before he sinned, it became his lot as soon as he was taken out of the Garden, as soon as he earned the curse.

"But," you ask, "why did God purpose that all of us should go through hardship and sorrow before we are taken back into Eden? If He is to take us back, why did He not do it in the beginning, in Adam's days?" – The answer to all these questions is found in

Luke 15:11-13 – "And He said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.

And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living."

The story is that there were two sons in the family. The older one chose to remain home, but the younger one chose to go away.

And you know what happened shortly afterwards: The younger son wasted all his substance in riotous living.

I am sure that the father knew beforehand that his son was headed for hardship. He loved him and longed to spare the youth from shame, sorrow and hard trial that he was headed for. The very fact that on the boy's return, the father met him while yet a long way off, and made a banquet for him, even after he had wasted his father's substance and disgraced the family name, is evidence enough that the father loved the boy supremely. The boy was allowed to leave home only because nothing but experience of his own could ever demonstrate his folly, and prove the father's love for him.

What forced the boy to dislike home? – It was his desire to live riotously. No boy or girl under the same circumstances runs away from home except for the hope of gaining freedom and to practice riotous living, to do at will what the carnal heart longs to do.

There may be a great deal of temporary fun in prodigality but it only ends in humiliation and disrepute. If the prodigal were living in our day, what do you suppose he would do to start out on the highway of fun, to have a good time? – The first thing he would do for sure would be to buy, if possible, an automobile,

fine clothes, a diamond ring, a sparkling stickpin, and a wrist watch. Oh, yes, he would not neglect to put a flower in his lapel and a silk handkerchief in his pocket. There may be nothing wrong in having some of these things, but it certainly is not commendable or even good taste to adorn oneself with everything that can be put on. It is, to say the least, ridiculous to deck oneself in peacock fashion.

And whom would the wayward boy take for rides? – The girls, of course. And where would they go? – Not where the preachers go, and not to church, either.

Verse 14 – "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."

If you spend all you have and all you earn, you too, will sooner or later have famine. Providence brought the famine in order to bring the boy to "himself," to his senses. Indeed, no boy runs away from home when he is himself; and, conversely, neither does he return home understandingly before he comes to himself. Thus he learns his lesson, but at what a cost! At what a cost!

Verses 15, 16 – "And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."

The prodigal obtained a job all right, but it did not "fill the bill," he was still in want.

Verses 17-19 – "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread

enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of they hired servants."

He finally discovered that he had been playing the fool, and so he began to reason with himself about going back home, saying, "Just think how many servants are in my father's house and they all have plenty. Why should I perish with hunger? But, what shall I say when I get there?" Having come to himself, he felt, of course, that he must say just the right thing, the thing that would commend him to Heaven as well as to earth.

Had that boy taken his father's counsel in the first place, he would not have had to be humiliated. And what a humiliation! And what a lesson, too, not only for the young, but for the old also. Yes, there are thousands, young and old alike, who learn great lessons, but they often pay a tremendous price only because they are ever listening to the "humbug" of the Devil. Why are they so easily carried away with his allurements? – Only because his attractive bait appeals to man's selfish and sinful nature.

The prodigal's humiliation awaits all the young who do not profit by the counsel of the older, and all the older who do not profit by the counsel of the Lord. This is one of the laws of God which no one has ever been able to dodge.

The prodigal's experience now answers the questions, Why did God remove Adam out of the Garden? Since God has to forgive him some day anyway, why did He not forgive him shortly after his fall and take him back to Eden? Why could not all mankind have been thus saved from going through misery and death

before going back to Eden?

Had God allowed Adam and Eve to remain in the Garden after they had sinned and continued to have access to the "tree of life," He would have thereby perpetuated their sinful lives in their sinful state. What a terrible thing that would have been – sinners having to live for ever and ever! And had He spared them and their descendants from going through hardships and death, they could no more have come to realize what life of sin is, no, no more than could the prodigal before going through licentiousness, bankruptcy, hard labor and poverty.

"But," you say, "If the Lord could not have brought Adam and Eve into the Garden before first passing through death and the resurrection, did He have to curse the ground and cause them to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow?" And why did He have to cause them to eat their bread in sorrow for 6,000 years? – Because all who are ever to enter the Kingdom, get back into Eden, must first come to themselves as did the prodigal, for all must be brought to realize that everything away from the Garden is nothing more than swine's husks.

Because work is essential and because sinners by nature dislike work, the thorns and thistles were created to compel them to go to work for a living. If we leave the obnoxious weeds in the ground, and spend our time having fun, they will choke out the crops, and we, like the prodigal, will have famine. Thus, no work, no eat. God Who knows what is best for us has made it that we earn our living the hard way, to work all day long with but little rest.

Those who come to themselves, to them work is

pleasure. Only fools hate work.

Before the modern machinery was invented farmers were not so troubled with pestilence as they now are. But just as the machinery increased and improved, so the bugs did, too. And for what reason? – To still keep us working and thus out of mischief.

When I came to the United States some years ago, I saw all manner of machinery, machinery that did a great amount of work in a short time. But along with these conveniences, what else did I see? – I saw thistles and thorns multiplied a thousand fold, and pestilence of all kinds devouring the crops.

In the Old Country we did not have machinery, but we never had to spray any vegetation. Why? – Because working without machinery the people were busy as it was. If they had had to fight pestilence too, and nothing with which to fight it, then they could have raised nothing and would have had to starve. Thus it is seen that if the machinery frees us of work, God sends the bugs to put us back to work.

The Lord commanded that we should with sweat earn our living, but He knew that most of us would not do so if we did not have to. And He also knew that if we did not have much to do, we would get into mischief, into riotous living, and consequently never come to ourselves, and never go back to Eden. He therefore cursed the ground for our good.

Moreover, to the woman who sits down and does but little to keep up her home, God brings the bed bugs and roaches, the mice and the rats, the flies and the ants, the lice and the fleas, and the mosquitoes, too. These will put her to working inside

and out if anything will.

Were it not for the pests, what would man be! God, you see, made all these things for a good purpose but in spite of the pests' urging sluggers to get up and start moving, still some prefer to live as pigs! Why wait until He sends His great army of pests? Why not take His counsel, keep busy, and do what you can to make others happy, to make the world better than it is, to let it know that you are in it to do it good, not to be burden upon it? Then the angels will delight to encamp round about you, and the Lord Himself will come and sup with you.

If we make God's business our business, His kingdom our home, then all the other things which we are striving for and worrying about will be supplied to us in great abundance. Let us, then, no longer be Christians outwardly and Gentiles at heart, but rather let us be without "guile in our mouths" and with "palms in our hands."

Why did mankind have to wait six thousand years before he could return to Eden? – Because it takes that long to get a large enough number of repentant prodigals, prodigals who have come to themselves, who realize that it is better to be a door keeper in the Father's home than to be sunk in so-called fun away from His home. God is not taking any of us back into Eden in the state of mind we were born with. No, no more than He took Adam back into Eden in his fallen state.

All must come to themselves. "…Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nah. 1:9.

Now we can see why it is easier for a camel to go through the needle's eye than it is for a rich man to get into the Kingdom. Only the prodigals who through

experience realize that this world is not their Father's house, only those who start back to Eden with the same kind of mind and with the same kind of confession as that of the prodigal are to make up the Kingdom.

Moreover, when the children of Israel went into the land of Egypt, they made a fine living in Goshen. They lived like kings. Yes, they had even much better living than the best of the Egyptians. God knew, though, that if when the time neared for their deliverance they continued to live like kings, if everything continued to be as easy for them as it had been while Joseph was living, they never, never would make up their minds to go back to the promised land. So it was that Providential trying circumstances were brought to cause them to cry day and night for deliverance. Then they were ready to go. To make sure, though, that they all would leave Egypt, the Lord permitted the Egyptian taskmasters to lash their backs and to make their labor extra hard while Moses was in the land. Likewise must the love of the world be beaten out of us, too, if we are ever to start out for our Eden home.

If you boys and girls want to have riotous living, you can have it. Indeed, there is more to be had today than there was to be had in the days of the original prodigal. But remember that if you ever get back to our Eden home you must pay the same price he paid. There is to be no free ticket for any, old or young.
Eccles. 4:5 – "The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh."

The fool folds his hands together; he despises work. He eats his own flesh: Rather than work, he will even stay hungry, causing his stomach to draw on

his reserve fat, and thus be becomes steadily thinner. Who wants to be a fool?

Eccles. 7:2 – "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men: and the living will lay it to his heart."

The house of feasting brings the end of all men who live for fun, for riotous living. "The living will lay it to his heart." Those, then, who do not lay it to heart are not really living, and they need to be revived.

Verse 3 – "Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better."

If you indulge in "fun," then your heart will someday be made sad, but if your heart is sad, it will be made glad. Only a fool chooses to be in the house of mirth. As for me, I would rather be in the house of mourning, "suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Heb. 11:25.

There were two men who went into partnership after the Lord asked them to move into another land far from their homeland. There they became rich. In fact, they became so rich that they had to separate into two companies.

The one who chose to live in the hills, who chose to make his living the hard way, proved to be the wiser. But the one who chose to live in the plains, where he could make an easy living, proved to be exceedingly foolish. The latter was the younger, too, you know. He pitched his tent toward Sodom, and the longer he looked at the city, the closer he drew to it. Finally he decided to move his tent right into it where

he could see it all with ease.

He became a great man, perhaps the mayor of the city as some think, and that thus it was there he sat at the gate of Sodom. Most likely, though, he sat there waiting for strangers to invite home. True, Lot's family had exciting, riotous living among the Sodomites, but the fun did not last forever, and Lot overnight lost everything he ever possessed; he came out the poorest of the poor. Lot, you see paid high for his fun, and if you want to pay such a price for your fun, you may do as he did.

The man from whose writings we are now reading was and still is, you know, the wisest man the world has ever had. Now, what did he say the fool does? – The fool goes into the house of mirth. Do you want to profit by the experience of others? Do you want to take the wise man's counsel? If you do, then wisdom rests with you.

Eccles. 10:18 – "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through."

The slothful man's house decays, his house rots before he even has it finished, or before he has it repaired. He is late in everything – a bad habit for one to get into. When you drive out into the country, along the roadside you will notice that the houses which are badly run down and unkempt, are the houses of those whom you see on the porches rocking away time when they should be working. But you will hardly see anyone sitting idle around the houses that are well cared for. If you see people at all, you will see them doing something. What are you doing, Brother, Sister? – Do you know the way back to Eden?

Let us again turn to Ecclesiastes.

Eccles. 3:17 – "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

God is to judge the wicked and the righteous, because there is a time for every purpose and every work. Everyone is to give an account for his time as well as for his deeds.

Eccles 8:6 – "Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him."

Because there is a time for every purpose and every work, there is therefore to be a time of judgment for both in the church and in the world. And because there is a time and a season for every purpose, the misery of man is increased if he does not heed this Divine law. He must do everything on time, lest his miseries increase.

Prov. 6:6 – "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise."

The man, a student; the little ant a teacher! What a humiliating statement against the idler!

Verses 7, 8 – "Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."

The ant knows <u>what</u> to do and <u>when</u> to do it and does it. It never fails to make a living though it has no boss. Were you to go down into its house, you would find provisions for more than the season requires. It knows when harvest comes, and knows how

to make the most of it. If a man fails to do as the ant, if he fails to take notice of the time and of the season, then his miseries shall certainly increase.

Had this counsel come from men, we would perhaps not need it; but it came from God, from Him Who has control of everything. He knows your life from the time you are born to the time you die. He knows what kind of life you are to go through. You may cause yourself to have to go the prodigal's way, but how much better if you do not. The best for you is to go the Father's way.

Ever remember that there are only two master minds in the world – the mind of God and the mind of Satan. We, as sinners, are born with the mind of Satan, and it stays with us until we are born again, born of the Spirit and with the mind of God. To do right, then, we must do the opposite of what our natural minds tell us, and we shall then be doing what the mind of God is striving to make us do.

The young people know what you adults are doing. They know how much you think about God and His Kingdom. They know how much you think of this place and of His work. Since they know all that, and much more, then it is time for all of us to realize that we cannot lead the children closer to God's objectives than we ourselves are; we cannot inspire in them faith and zeal in anything while we ourselves do not have it.

I do hope that those who are headed for the prodigal's way, may come to themselves before a miserable experience comes to them.

Thus is the way back to Eden clearly charted for everyone that comes into this world.

OPENING PRAYER THOUGHT

We shall continue the reading where we left off last Sabbath: The Mount of Blessing, page 148 –
M.B., pg. 148 – "Jesus, while He dwelt on earth, dignified life in all its details by keeping before men the glory of God, and by subordinating everything to the will of His Father. If we follow His example, His assurance to us is that all things needful in this life 'shall be added.' Poverty or wealth, sickness or health, simplicity or wisdom, – all are provided for in the promise of His grace.

"God's everlasting arm encircles the soul that turns to Him for aid, however feeble that soul may be. The precious things of the hills shall perish; but the soul that lives for God, shall abide with Him. 'The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.' The city of God will open its golden gates to receive him who learned while on earth to lean on God for guidance and wisdom, for comfort and hope, amid loss and affliction. The songs of the angels will welcome him there, and for him the tree of life shall yield its fruit. 'The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.' "

And what shall our prayer be about this afternoon? – Yes, let us pray for a realization that if we put our full dependence upon the Lord, trusting in Him for guidance and wisdom, He will not fail us; we ought to pray for a realization that His everlasting arms are ever ready to encircle the soul that turns to Him for help; and should pray for implicit faith in His promise that if we subordinate everything to the will of the Father, then all things needful in this life, "shall be added" to our eternal interests.

ONLY TWO WAYS

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY V.T. HOUTEFF,
MINISTER OF DAVIDIAN 7TH-DAY ADVENTISTS
SABBATH, AUGUST 10, 1946
MT. CARMEL CHAPEL
WACO, TEXAS

You often hear that there are many ways to the Kingdom of eternal peace and prosperity, that we can take any one of them and get there. I, for one, believe that there are only two ways, that the one leads to eternal life and the other to eternal death. To give you my reason for believing that there are only these two ways, I shall read from the never-erring Book:

Matt. 7:13, 14 – "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

How many ways? – Just two: the right way and the wrong way. These two ways have always been with us and ever will be as long as both the natural and the spiritual man live on earth. They came into existence with the first two brothers that lived on earth – Cain and Abel. Those that travel in the strait way are the Abelites, and those that travel in the broad way are the Cainites. There are many travelers in the latter because all that come into this world start out in it, and most of them ever stay in it.

This is so because to begin with we are born of the flesh – "Cainites" by nature. Consequently, before

we are born again, born of the Spirit, and thus put into the strait way, we all travel in the broad way. Besides, the broad way is broad enough for one to carry all that sin offers, but the strait way is narrow enough to exclude everything but the traveler himself. Consequently, comparatively speaking, there are few who choose to deny the desires of the flesh and to forsake sin in all its forms. Naturally, then, many travel the "way which seemeth right unto a man," although "…the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12. Now let us turn to the gospel of John, chapter 9:

Verse 39 – "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind."

Here we are told that Jesus came for judgment which will cause those that see, to become blind; and those that are blind, to see! The expression is peculiar, but the meaning is clear: He came to change every human being – to reverse everyone's situation – those that are blind to see, and those that do see to become blind.

Let us now judge our own case. If our vision at this moment is the same as always, then plainly enough His coming has not profited us as yet: If on His visitation we assume that we already see and know enough, have need of nothing more, and cannot be convinced otherwise, then we shall become blind forever, will never be able to see what He wishes us to see. But if we admit that we are blind to spiritual things, that our eyes need to be opened, then Christ will make us see. Such will by experience say, "Once I was blind, but now I see." The blind man's experience must be ours.

Verses 40, 41 – "And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

If you say you see, and still continue sinning, then you yourself become responsible for your sin. But if you do not see, He will make you see, so that you may quit sinning.

John 10:1 – "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

Do you want to get into the "sheepfold"? If you do, you must get in through the "Door." If you gain entrance in some other way, eventually you will be cast out into outer darkness, there to gnash your teeth. From these alternatives we all must make our choice.

Verse 2 – "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep."

In verse 9 Christ said, "I am the door." Connect verse 9 with verse 2, and you will see that those who enter in through the Lord's way are the only ones whom He acknowledges as shepherds of His flock. The Lord, therefore, implies that there are unauthorized shepherds herding His sheep.

Verse 3 – "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

The porter, the one in charge, opens the door only

to those who have complied with the requirements for admission. In other words, the Lord is plainly telling us that no one may dodge the porter's inspection and forever get by. And yet in spite of this warning, and in spite of the fact that to go through the door is even easier than to climb over the fence, some choose to take a chance stealing their way in – pretending to be in the "faith" thus getting into the sheepfold and hoping to take over or to get a following. It is, however, not possible to induce God's true sheep to follow them for they know the true Shepherd's Voice.

Only those who gain entrance through the Door and to whom "the porter" (the one through whom the Spirit of Prophecy is manifested) opens are the authorized shepherds whose voices God's sheep hear. All such shepherds call the sheep by name: They are well acquainted with their flocks because they are intensely interested in them, and they carefully lead them in and out.

Here the student of present Truth will note that by this illustration Christ points out that the only shepherds that He recognizes as His are those to whom the "porter" opens the Door and invites them in. The student will also note that all others are branded as imposters. And the sheep that hear the false shepherd's voice, He declares, are not His sheep.
Verse 4 – "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."

Since His sheep know not faces, but know voices, then, those who pay attention to faces and who cannot differentiate between voice and voice are sure to be misled by self-appointed shepherds. But those who

give heed only to the Voice, the Voice of Truth, are gently led in for shelter and out for green pastures. God's people are not bothered with faces, but they do give earnest heed to God-appointed voices uttering Truth.

Verse 5, 8, 10 – "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.... All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.... The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

God's sheep are thus carefully led in and out, both to shelter and to "meat in due season," to present Truth. The "goats," though, those who dodge the porter while entering, must, of course, do so while coming out, too. Consequently, they cannot be led by God's appointed shepherds. Let us turn to John 14 and read but one verse.

John 14:6 – "Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

From this we see that Jesus is the only way to the Kingdom. The idea, then, that there are many ways whereas there is but one Jesus, and that they all lead to the Kingdom Eternal, is only a "hum of a humbug" that unsanctified hearts like to listen to. They are of those who are dodging the porter at the "Door," of those who know that their deeds cannot stand inspection.

If we are to have a home in the Kingdom, we must never be like them. We must know the worst of our

case. We must never say that if "so and so" gets there, we will, too. It may be true that if "so and so" were to get there, we all would, too, but "so and so" is not getting there. We must not, therefore, play the fool by making "so and so" our example. We must follow the Lord through His Truth, the Truth that makes us free.

As there is but one right Way and but one Door, and as all Christians do not see alike and do not walk together, could it be that we are all wrong? all going in a wrong direction? – No, that could never be as long as the Lord does not forsake the earth. Indeed not, for He must have a people in whom to confide His Truth and by whom to save those who choose to go His way. So, those who choose to go some other way will in the end discover that the Devil, not the Lord, is behind them, and that hell, not the Kingdom, is ahead of them.

We should do well to discuss for a few minutes the qualifications which a shepherd must have in order to pass the porter's inspection. I may use a few illustrations, perhaps only two or three.

You remember that there was a child by the name Samuel who early in life came to walk in "the Way," and therein he was trained. Now think on what happened: One night Samuel, you recall, was suddenly awakened by a Voice. Supposing it to be the voice of Eli, he quickly jumped up from bed and went to inquire of Eli. Of course Eli was surprised, but he calmly said, "I did not call you. Go back to bed." Since there was no other person but Eli around. Samuel was certain that the elderly man had called him. Nevertheless he obeyed and straightway went back to bed.

Before long, though, perhaps as soon as Samuel had fallen asleep again, the Voice called the second time. You know that Samuel could easily have then said to himself, "That old man must be dreaming. Here he is calling me again. But I won't be bothered with him any more; I'll just let him holler all he can." Samuel, nevertheless, as quickly as before hurried to his master's bed, only again to hear the words, "Go back to bed, I did not call you!" Still a third time he heard someone calling, and just as willingly and as respectfully as before, he went to his master's bedside the third time! Eli finally perceiving that the Lord must have been calling the child, therefore instructed Samuel what to do. And what did Samuel do? – Exactly as he was told.

Had Samuel not been as willing, as respectful, and patient as he was, do you think he would ever have come to hold the highest office in the land? – Of course not. There was nothing else but the saintly qualifications of character which Samuel demonstrated that night that promoted him to the office of prophet, priest, and judge.

Do we still wonder why Samuel was called out of bed three times in succession and why he and Eli were disturbed in the night? – For two reasons: (1) To prove that regardless of the inconvenience, Samuel would not hesitate to arise when called, and that he would not become angry, that he would not "sass" Eli. (2) The Lord wanted to help Eli; He wanted to prevent the possibility of Eli's concluding that Samuel was getting out of place and questioning his ability to discipline his own sons. Had Eli not been given the opportunity to know for certain that the Lord talked to the child, he then could have easily concluded that Samuel was conniving against the sons of Eli. But

providential circumstances being as they were, Eli certainly knew without doubt that God had a message for him. There was no room for doubt.

Boys today, as in times past, are anxious to get somewhere in life, yet millions of them fail to reach their goal and many ruin their lives. They want to become great men, but they fail to even make middle men. And the reason? – It is simply because they overestimate their own powers, and underestimate God's power. They know not that with God there is no failure, and that with Him "they can get places."

You boys and girls lend yourselves unreservedly to God. He needs great men, and He can make you such. When you learn God's way and become a responsible boy or girl as did Samuel, God will not overlook your zeal, integrity, and sincerity. He will give you something great for your reward. Yes, you will then indeed be great.

Ancient David also was a young boy and nothing more than a common shepherd. But he was a good shepherd, the best in the land. God saw that he was mindful of and faithful to his duties, and so He determined to make the boy a king over His people. Indeed, when a person does one thing well, it is likely that he will do another thing just as well. David was as good in his duties as was Samuel in his. That is why he was lifted from the sheepfold and placed in the palace.

I am thinking of another boy, a young boy in his teens – Joseph. The Lord saw something in him that He could not find in Joseph's brothers. Not only was he his father's favorite son, but he was God's favorite, too. God had in mind something great for Joseph

–-greater than the world could ever think of. To prove himself trust-worthy Joseph had to first become a slave. He had to be trained for the big job.

So the way Providence worked, it was that his brothers sold him to be a slave. Just then he recalled what the Lord had promised him in a dream – that besides his brothers, even his father and mother were to bow down to him. Can you imagine what a splendid opportunity was his to curse God when he saw himself on the way to slavery? He might have said, "Why should I serve a God that promises glory but instead gives humiliation, hardship and isolation?" But Joseph did as wisely as Job: By sanctifying God in his heart, he in effect said, "Though He slay me, yet in Him will I trust."

Joseph quickly reconciled himself to his situation, confident that his father's God knew all about his troubles. Thus his slave masters, the Ishmaelites, immediately recognized that they were in possession of a fine slave, a slave that they could sell for a good piece of money. How do I know this? – I know it because the Ishmaelites took him straightway to a man who would buy nothing but the best, to the richest man in Egypt, to one that could pay the price. Rich men, you know, do not buy cheap things, neither do salesmen take cheap things to them.

Even while in grief, Joseph must have demonstrated his ability to serve, and must have shown great respect to his slavemasters while on the way to Egypt, because then it was that the peddlers found out the worth of their captive, and then realized that they could sell him to someone who wanted something good and that could pay the price. Potiphar, too, soon found out that Joseph was in all respects trustworthy.

Thus it was that he became Potiphar's number 1 man. Even Mrs. Potiphar fell for him. It was at this juncture, you recall, that he came to the climax of his graduation test. Passing the greatest test of his life, he graduated from the house of Potiphar, then from the prison house, whereupon he was promoted to Egypt's throne, the world's greatest. In promotion or in demotion Joseph gave God the glory and did his honest best. At every thing he was put to, he was second to none, and thus he became the greatest among all earthly living.

As to the real secret of his success you will find in one simple principle – firmness against temptation to sin, and faithfulness to duty: "Ah! I cannot do this wicked thing. I shall sin neither against men nor against God," was his answer to temptation.

This is why Joseph was great in his father's house, in the hands of the Ishmaelites, in the house of Potiphar, in the prison cell, on the throne of Pharaoh, and in all the world. This is why all the ancient world bowed down to him.

From these biographical facts is seen that the simple principles which brought success to Samuel, to David and to Joseph, can doubtless bring success to all of us. And remember that success begins right wherever you happen to be, whether in the temple courts, in the sheepfold, in the yard of a slave master, in the prison house, or in the king's palace – makes no difference where. You need not run to catch success, but you do need to bend down and pick it up. Yes, indeed, success drops from the sky, but to pick it up you must bend down very low. This you must do if you wish to really succeed in anything.

Right now the Lord is advertising for at least 144,000 life-savers, with headquarters on famous Mt. Zion – a greater post than was held by Joseph. Will you be one of them? There are greater opportunities today than ever before. Why not venture into something in which there is no chance-taking? Anyone can succeed if he is willing to pay the price.

In view of these never-erring alternatives why is it, pray tell me, that young people today are so careless and indifferent? Why is it? They are not bad boys and girls; they are born with the same nature as those of any other generation. In fact, those on this hill are good boys and girls, but they need to be born again, born through the Spirit – changed, made to see.

Young people are naturally blind to spiritual things just as newborn kittens are blind to material things. The young need to be taught the spiritual way of life, they need to have the sin-craving nature pried out of them, and a sin-hating nature instilled into them.

The parents who have already been made to see, need now to awake to their duty. They need to educate their children in the way of Christ as they need to educate them in the way of society. This they can do only by precept and example.

Our greatest Exemplar came from Heaven to earth, walked and worked with men three decades, died and arose again. This He did in order to change men, to recreate the image of God in them and to give them life for evermore. If these boys and girls put forth the necessary effort to make something of themselves, then we certainly ought to happily help them reach their goal.

You, men and women, came on this hill, not because somebody brought you, but because you thought it your duty. You nevertheless, brought with you these little ones. So it is that you came through the "Door," but the boys and girls came in your luggage, as it were. And now, if they are to become permanent members in this "sheepfold" they too, must pass examination. You see, they are going through their struggle now just as you adults went through yours before you came here.

And as somebody put forth effort for you there, in like manner you now must put forth effort for the youth here.

We need young evangelists, converted boys and girls to work for the unconverted, to exert the right kind of influence over other boys and girls. This is essential because converted boys and girls do more for their own age than can the older people. Then, too, we need young men and young women to help the boys and the girls in soul-winning work – not to preach to them, but to lead them.

You saw how the boys hung around D_____when he was here. If D_____had been converted, if he had made up his mind to serve the Lord as did David of old, imagine what a power for good he could have been! He could have been a marvelous influence for good among the young. He could have become a great leader. He had as great a chance as any of the great men of God in times past. But the opportunity D_____ had, every boy and girl has. One converted boy or girl can turn a bad and unprofitable conversation into a worthwhile one. One good example can do more than a sermon.

Boys and girls, there is an opportunity for you to get down to business with God, and to make up your

minds what you want to be. You do not have to be a preacher to begin with, but you can right now be social evangelists. You boys and girls can turn other boys and girls away from their foolishness, from their unwise acts and evil conversations. Others will follow your example. What a great opportunity is yours if you will only avail yourselves of it!

We are longing to see you boys and girls have a good time. We are tired of imposing restrictions upon you. You just establish our confidence in you, and you will thereby free yourselves from rules and restrictions.

If you show us that you are determined to be what Samuel and Joseph were, we will not have to worry about what you do or where you go. Yes, establish our confidence in you, and you will never be troubled by us. It is only through someone's confidence in you that you can gain anything anyway.

Joseph and Samuel did the essential thing. They put their whole hearts into whatever they did. All the great men in the world do and that is why they are great. Whatever you boys and girls do, really do it. No fooling about it. In the end of each day you should be able to say, "My work was almost perfect, and my deeds unquestionable." This you <u>can</u> do. Go to the "Door," and tell Him your needs and your trials. Say, "Lord, my trials are Your trials. I will not let them trouble me any longer. I will put my heart and soul into Thy work."

Do this, boys and girls, and you will see things amazingly different. You will see that your ways of the past were ways of foolishness. You will say to yourself, "Was I not a great fool to do that and the

other?" I know what I am talking about. I am telling you this from experience.

Why do many travel in the broad way? – Because there you can be anything. But on the narrow way, you must be something really great.

A number of boys and girls are no longer with us because they were determined to continue in the broad way. They may get some atisfaction there, but they are headed for a great test, and for a great loss, too. Unless all who have not been "born again" come to themselves as did the prodigal, they will go all the way to the end of the road. And what then? – The devil behind and a great precipice ahead. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Why continue in the fool's way?

Better not pass up your opportunity while it is knocking at your door. Take the "straight way" and stay in it, and you shall have prosperity and contentment all the days of your life. You shall neither want nor regret. This peace of mind you need. Why not take it?

Don't Miss Out On This

If you have not already sent for your copy of the publicized and much discussed little 96–page health book (The Entering Wedge) that has made the big stir throughout the Adventist world and that has put The E. W. Society in the limelight, do not miss it if your health, home, and happiness mean something to you. In our opinion this book is the best we have ever seen on the subject. We actually feel that it is God-sent, and that a copy of it should be in every home. We are informed that you may now obtain it without the coupon. Send your name, address, and the name of the church to which you belong (you are requested to print), to the address on back cover.

A CHRISTIAN

Could I be called a Christian
If everybody knew
My secret thoughts and feelings
And everything I do?

Oh, could they see the likeness
Of Christ in me each day?
Oh, could they hear Him speaking
In every word I say?

Could I be called a Christian
If everybody could know
That I am found in places
Where Jesus would not go?

Oh, could they hear His echo
In every song I sing?
In eating, drinking, dressing
Could they see Christ in me?

Could I be called a Christian
If judged by what I read,
By all my recreations
And every thought and deed?

Could I be counted Christlike
As I now work and pray
Unselfish, kind, forgiving
To others every day?

–The Evangel.

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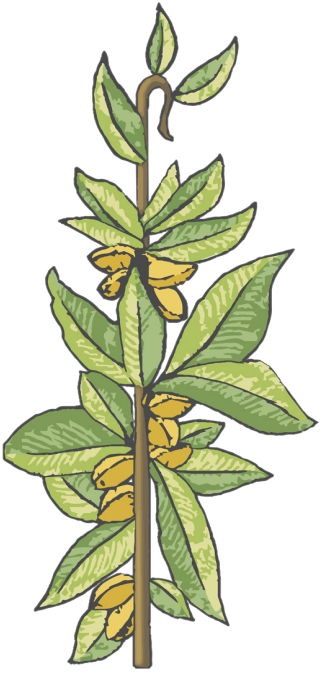

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