



# JUDGEMENT WITHOUT A TRIAL?

David Clayton



**T**he *most* misunderstood teaching of the Advent faith is the doctrine of the investigative Judgement. This misunderstanding is present not only among non-Adventists, but is also evident among hundreds of thousands within Adventist circles including many of those who are teachers and pastors. This fact was forcibly impressed on my mind recently as I examined the arguments of several persons who have concluded that the Investigative Judgement is a false, unscriptural and anti-gospel teaching.

All Christians believe basically in two aspects of final judgement. They believe in

- (a) A Sentencing or a Verdict: That God will one day pass sentence upon every human who has ever lived.
- (b) An execution: That the sentence will be carried out with the wicked being destroyed and the righteous inheriting eternal life.

The Investigative Judgement, however, seeks to introduce a third element into the concept of this final judgement. It is

- (c) An Investigation: Before sentence is either passed or executed, God will first of all examine the life of each person in order to determine whether such a person should be sentenced to death or to life.

To simplify the issue: Most Christians will agree that God will sentence all men to either life or death. They will also agree that God will destroy the wicked and re-

ward the righteous with eternal life. They object, however, to the idea that God will conduct a public investigation before passing His sentences.

The early advent believers insisted that the concept of the investigative judgement is clearly taught by the Bible in spite of the numerous objections to it. Were they right? Let us concede from the beginning that they chose a term to describe this doctrine which is not found in the Bible. The Bible nowhere uses the term "Investigative Judgement" and it is usually best if we describe our beliefs using the terminology of the Bible. The real question is, however, is the concept taught in the Bible? Let us be quite sure what we are talking about by first of all carefully defining our terms.

### WHAT IS THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGEMENT?

(a) The word "Judgement" can refer to any one of three phases of judgement,

- (1) *examination or investigation of evidence.*
- (2) *Sentencing or the passing of a verdict.*
- (3) *The execution of the sentence.*

In the case of the term "Investigative Judgement" the word judgement refers to the first aspect of judgement, which is the investigation of evidence. Let us note in passing that there has never in the history of mankind been a fair judgement which did not involve, first of all an examination of all the known facts which were relevant to the case in question.

(b) The word "investigation" means an examination. In the context of the term "Investigative Judgement" it means a review of every single factor in the life of an individual which may have some value in revealing whether or not a person is a genuine Christian.

(c) The doctrine of the Investigative Judgement also teaches that this investigation will take place for all who profess, or have ever professed to be followers of Christ, before Jesus comes again to reward the faithful and that it will involve the cases of the dead as well as the living.

Generally speaking, many of those who are critical of the Investigative Judgement have failed to examine the subject carefully from all angles. The result has been a distorted picture which has appeared to be unscriptural and even ridiculous. However, if we are going to criticize something, then it is only fair that we understand it properly first so that we know what we are talking about.

The basic misconception concerning the Investigative Judgement goes something like this:

- (a) The life records of all Christians (beginning with the dead) are presently being examined in heaven.
- (b) Soon this examination will pass to the living, and any individual's name could be called at any moment, we know not when.
- (c) A person's eternal destiny will be decided by his condition at the moment when his name is called. If he has unconfessed sin, he is lost, if he has confessed and forsaken all his sins, he will be saved.
- (d) Not until this judgement has taken place can we be certain of our salvation.

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*Open Face* is dedicated to the promotion of the truths committed to the Advent movement, as believed and taught by the early Adventist pioneers. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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This judgement, in other words, is the decisive factor which will result in our being either saved or lost.

Some years ago I became very troubled about the concept of the Investigative Judgement as I understood it then. The possibility of my name being called at any moment, unknown to me, and my eternal destiny being determined by whatever my status chanced to be at that moment seemed unfair and unreasonable, and not a concept which was in keeping with the character of a just and loving God.

At that time I was still in my twenties and had been a Christian for only about six years. My problem was this: "Suppose my name should be called today and I find that I am not ready—I have unconfessed sins—then I shall be lost. However, if I had been given another day of life, before my name was called, then, being a conscientious Christian, it is probable that I would have confessed that sin and thus, would have been saved. Therefore, my salvation would not depend upon whether or not I really am a child of God, but upon the question of what moment my name should chance to be called!" This did not make sense to me and it did not appear to be fair either. Furthermore, I could see that a person who had been a Christian for say fifty years, before his name came up, had

an advantage over the one whose name was examined after he had been a Christian for only ten or twenty years, since the older Christian would have had more time to repent of all his sins. All in all I was not satisfied with my understanding of the doctrine.

When I shared these concerns with others they consoled me with the words, "well, God knows already who deserves to be saved and He will certainly not call your name at a moment when you are not prepared." This however, only created more problems in my mind because it seemed that this presented the idea of a public trial which was "rigged". A trial which was intended to establish guilt or innocence, to prove something in a public way, but which was so set up that there was the possibility of only one outcome. This again, did not seem to me to exalt God's qualities of fairness, openness and justice. I therefore decided to do a more careful study of the concept of the Investigative Judgement from the Bible, the writings of Ellen White, and from the standpoint of reason and my knowledge of God's character.

It was easy to see how a *dead* person's status could be determined by an examination of his life's record which included every minute detail. However, with a living person it was different. If we are given an entirely clean sheet by God when we confess and forsake our sins, then it is possible for a person to have a clean record today and a soiled one tomorrow, or vice-versa. If God is ever to give a person a clean sheet once and for all and forever, and permanently seal that person, then it is clear that such a person must be brought to the place where he will never sin again.

The long and short of it is that I found one passage in Ellen White's writings which basically cleared up the questions in my mind and enabled me to see perfect sense and fairness in the concept of an Investigative Judgement. The statement says:

*"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . [Rev. 13:11-17 quoted.]*

*This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All*

*who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast (Letter 11, 1890). {7BC 976.}*"

Let us think of what this statement implies. The eternal destiny (salvation or damnation) of God's living people is to be determined by a certain test. Not by records in a book. Clearly this must apply only to the living, since the dead will not be around to experience this final crisis. But doesn't Ellen White teach elsewhere that the Investigative Judgement is what will determine our eternal destiny? Yes, she does. But here she explains that this Investigative Judgement (here called a "test") for the last generation of Christians will be based upon how we respond to the trial brought on by the Mark of the Beast crisis, rather than upon the basis of records in a book. This is perfectly reasonable and entirely in harmony with the Scriptures.

An examination of a *living* person's history, recorded in a book will never fairly reveal a person's state, as long as there is the possibility that the person may still change. An examination of books will not accomplish much as long as you and I are still alive and possess the ability to change for good or bad. **The Judgement of the living, therefore, will not be based on books, but upon an examination of the response of each Christian as we are all thrown into the furnace of affliction known as "The great Tribulation."** This fiery trial will force every person to clearly take his stand either for, or against God and His truth. It will bring us to the place where all will clearly demonstrate in an unmistakable way whether or not we have a genuine relationship with Christ, or are mere professors. This trial will be of such an intensity that none will be able to remain in disguise. Every person's true loyalty and character will be clearly displayed for all the universe to see.

This crisis, however, is not only a test. It is also a graduation exercise. As trials and hardships crush and defeat those who are not genuine fighters, so this crisis will push the hypocrites far away from the way of

truth. On the other hand, as resistance only strengthens the will and the muscles of those who have the will to fight, so the trials brought on by the Mark of the Beast crisis will strengthen, purify and perfect those who truly have the spirit of God living in them. Every difficulty will only drive them closer to Christ until the test is over and they have clearly demonstrated that their relationship with Christ is real. They receive the seal of the living God, and their sins are blotted out.

This is the experience of the day of atonement. The day when God's people will be totally cleansed of all sin by a trial which will cause them to "afflict" their souls. References to this experience are to be found all over the Bible. (see Isa. 4: 3,4; Malachi 3:1-4.

Ellen White once said, "*Soon, none know how soon, the judgement will pass to the names of the living.*" Because this has not been looked at in the light of other things which she also said concerning the judgement, this statement has been often misunderstood. In actual fact, this is simply stating a very simple truth. Nobody knows when God will permit the great tribulation to begin. Nobody knows when the final crisis will come upon the living saints, therefore none know how soon the judgement will pass to the names of the living.

Like I said, hundreds of thousands, probably millions of Seventh-day Adventists hold to the concept of an Investigative Judgement which leads to fear and uncertainty, a warped view of the gospel as well as an unbalanced understanding of the plan of salvation. The true concept of the Investigative Judgement, however is not only reasonable and logical, but is also solidly founded on an abundance of scriptural evidence.

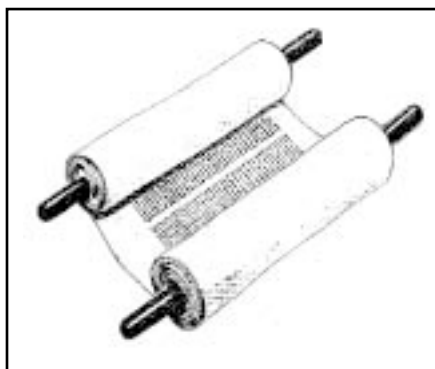
#### IS AN INVESTIGATIVE JUDGEMENT NECESSARY?

The question is often asked, "why does God need a judgement? Doesn't He know all things? Why would He need to closely examine the record of every individual to determine what He already knows? There are several answers to this question. First, it is evident that the controversy between God and Satan is a public affair, not a private matter. It involves billions of other beings who also have a stake in the outcome of the controversy. Why did God allow Satan to virtually destroy Job when

He knew that Satan's accusations were false? To prove something to whom? To God? To Satan? God already knew the truth and Satan's personal opinion was irrelevant. He was already lost without hope of redemption. The whole drama of Job's affliction was partially for Job's benefit, yes, but more for the purpose of proving a point to the watching universe. Satan accused God and Job publicly. Challenged God if you prefer. The consequences was not a private, secret duel, but a public conflict in which the character of Job was God's main weapon, with the universe carefully observing and taking note of the results.

God is fair in all His dealings. All His ways are justice and truth. There was a time when heaven was thrown into confusion by the work of a clever liar, and fully a third of the angels became convinced that God was an unfair deceiver. The remaining two thirds, while maintaining their faith in God were undoubtedly shaken and left with many gray areas which needed clarification. Over the centuries God has answered the questions one by one, and gave His supreme argument when He gave His only-begotten Son to die for the redemption of unworthy mankind. There can be no doubt that the deceptions of Satan have been fully unmasked by Calvary. The love, the justice, the wisdom of God blazed forth at Calvary with a brilliance never seen before in the history of the universe. The arguments of Satan against the government of God have come to an end.

But let us think carefully, is there nothing left to settle in the controversy? Are there no more lessons to be learned? Is there nothing more for God to demonstrate? Why are we then, not yet in heaven? Why



Will a faithful record of all our deeds truly reveal whether or not we are genuine Christians?

does the suffering and death continue? What is the purpose of future judgment since God Himself already knows all things? Why the seven last plagues? What is the point of a thousand year delay before sin is finally eradicated? The fact is, justice must not only be done but since transparency is a marked characteristic of every honest, just government, justice must be clearly *seen* to have been done. Therefore, it is reasonable that there should be an investigation of the lives of even those who have already been saved, not in order to save them, but in order to *demonstrate* that they truly have been saved, and are fit candidates for God's eternal kingdom.

Finally, let us consider that if there is need for God to publicly judge *one* single person in spite of His foreknowledge, then the same reason is the rationale for His judging *every* single person. The point again is, God knows everything, and always has known all things. The rebellion of Satan, the fall of Adam, the name and the destiny of every descendant of Adam were all open to the Almighty from the days of eternity. Yet every phase of the controversy has been allowed to take its course in spite of the horrors of suffering which have been the consequence. Why? In all of this, there were vital lessons to be learned, but not by God. The controversy is the school of the universe. Don't tell me that some little corners of it will be private between God and Satan alone. No. God, in His wisdom opens every area of His work before the universe. Not a single area is left where there may be the possibility for doubt and question. Is this foolish? Is this unnecessary? When Christ has finally "put all enemies under His feet," then it is over. The questions will then all have been forever settled. "Affliction shall not arise the second time", not because God has made it impossible for disobedience to take place, but because all His ways will have been so clearly demonstrated to be just, fair, good, perfect, that none will ever again question the ways of God as Lucifer once did.

#### THE EVIDENCE OF SCRIPTURE

I have often noticed that people seem to link the validity of the doctrine of the Investigative Judgement to the validity of the Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8:14. In

reality, Daniel 8: 14 only gives us a time for the beginning of this event. The doctrine itself is to be found all over the Bible. It is a teaching which receives a great deal of emphasis. If the Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8: 14 were proven to be false, (I don't believe it can be) then all it would mean is that we do not know the date of the beginning of the judgement. It would not affect the many other passages in the Scriptures which clearly teach an examination of all Christians of all ages in the time of the end, and a separation of these Christians into two groups, the true and the false.

The doctrine of an Investigative Judgement is clearly taught and receives great emphasis in the scriptures. The term "Investigative Judgement" is not used of course, but the concept is clearly taught. Jesus, Himself taught the concept of an Investigative Judgement very clearly in several of His parables.

(a) In Matthew Chapter 22:1-14, Jesus told the parable of a king who made a marriage for his son and invited certain guests (the Jews). The guests were unworthy and murdered his servants and generally despised the king's invitation. Finally the king sent his armies, and destroyed them and their city (the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70). The king then invited all to the wedding (the gospel invitation to the whole world) and many came in, both good and bad. Finally, the wedding was furnished with guests, all sitting down and waiting for the bridegroom's arrival. However, at this point, something surprising happens:

*And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen. (Matt 22:11-14)*

Please notice carefully that in this parable, all the guests, including those who responded to the invitation at the beginning, are represented as waiting for the bridegroom. Where are those who came in at the beginning, today? They are all asleep in their graves, awaiting the resurrection.



Only in the time of the judgement will it be known who are qualified to be guests at the wedding.

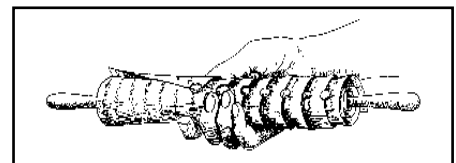
At this point, the king comes in to "SEE" the guests. What does this represent? What event is described here? At what point, prior to the return of Christ does God "SEE" or examine Christians? Please note that all are examined. Notice also that this examination takes place at a certain specific time "when the king comes in." **Not as each guest enters the hall.** Some get in without the proper equipment, but it is not until the king examines all that these unfit ones are finally manifested and removed. The question is, how does this process take place in the case of those who are already dead at the time when this examination takes place? Since none were examined when they entered the hall, but only when the king came in, how does this examination take place in the case of those who died before the king came in? This has to be on the basis of an investigation of the records of these dead Christians.

(b) In the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt.13:24-30) we see again the concept of the Investigative Judgement clearly taught. Christ plants a good field. All who are planted by Christ are good material, finally to be harvested. However, the devil puts tares among the wheat. The counterfeit is so convincing that even the angel reapers are not certain of the difference between both. God does not allow them to pull up the tares, because there is danger that they may also pull up the wheat as well! However, at a certain appointed time, "the time of the harvest," the tares are first gathered into bundles for the burning BEFORE the harvest takes place. What

does this event represent and does it only include one generation of Christians, or does it include all Christians who have ever lived? If this process took place for each generation as soon as that generation died, then it is clear that the separation of the wheat and tares did not begin in the time of the harvest, but was a continuous process taking place from the beginning. However, the king's specific command to the angels was that they should wait until the time of the harvest.

Several times Jesus used the phrase, "*many are called, but few are chosen.*" (Matt 22:14). His meaning was that, subsequent to the calling of Christians, there was to be another process—a choosing process. The call alone was not enough to guarantee salvation. The only ones chosen would be the ones who possessed the wedding garment. A qualification which would be clearly manifested in some recognizable way, insomuch that it would be recognized by the angel reapers who separate the wheat from the tares.

(c) Revelation 5 and 6 are a part of the "*Revelation of Jesus Christ.*" Here we are clearly dealing with many things which are symbolic. However, no one will deny that God intends that these symbols should be understood and interpreted in some reasonable and rational way, and that our interpretations must be derived from an examination of the symbols. Here again I believe we see very clearly and unquestionably an investigative judgement taking place.



(1) There is a great convocation in heaven at which ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands are assembled (Rev 5: 11). This convocation takes place "hereafter" (Rev 4:1) or some time after AD 95 when John received this vision.

(2) A book containing classified information is opened by the only Being in the universe qualified to do so. (Rev 5: 4-7)

(3) As the book is opened, all are invited to "Come and see (investigate - examine)" its contents. (Rev.6:1)

(4) Long dead people cry for vengeance as they are examined. How is this possible since dead people cannot talk? What does this represent? (Rev 6: 9,10) The **records** of the injustice which they suffered demand justice.

(5) These long dead people are **at this point** given white robes. What does this mean? How do you give a white robe to a dead person on the basis of an examination from a previously sealed book? This can only mean that at this point, while dead, they are declared to be righteous.

(6) This examination takes place while there is still a “little season” left (Rev.6:10) in which future saints are also to be killed as the living ones pass through the “great tribulation” and wash their robes white in the blood of the lamb. (Rev.7:14)

(7) While the dead Christians are “given” white robes, the living Christians who are sealed receive their white robes by another process. They “wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.” They are involved in the process of obtaining those white robes. This “washing” process also takes place during the period when the book is opened.

I will be the first to concede that there are some elements in Revelation 4-7 for which we do not have a perfect explanation. However, the facts which are clear and undeniable which we have referred to above, fit perfectly into the Adventist concept of the Investigative Judgement. In fact, there is no other interpretation of this passage which makes sense of all the elements and events described if we reject the Investigative Judgement.

#### WHAT PRACTICAL GOOD IS THE DOCTRINE?

Within Adventist circles a great deal of emphasis has often been placed on the fact that the judgement of the dead is now taking place. To a large extent, this is an irrelevant piece of information. Since I am alive, how does the judgement of the dead affect me?

Undoubtedly the issues in the judgement far exceed our limited concepts. While we have labeled the phases of the judgement as “Investigation”, “verdict” and “execution” there is evidently far more involved than these terms imply. Daniel 7:11 shows us that one of the issues in the Investigative Judgement will be the beast and his

works. During the judgement a decision is taken “because of the great words which the beast spake”, to give him to the “burning flame”. Here we see that the beast, as a system, is condemned during the investigative judgement and is destroyed and thrown into the “lake of fire” at the return of Christ. The people who make up the system however, do not receive their punishment until after the thousand years.

We are aware of some of the issues and some of the activities in the judgement. However, something happens in Revelation chapter 5 which suggests that far more is involved that we fully realize. When the Lamb takes the sealed book from the hand of the One seated on the throne, there is an outburst of praise, glory and honor given to God and to Christ such as is described nowhere else in the entire Bible or in any inspired writing:

*“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Rev 5:13)*

What is the reason for this universal explosion of adoration to God and Christ? It is the occasion of the opening of the book. The opening of this book is evidently an event which is charged with eternal consequences. The things to be revealed, the issues to be settled with the opening of this book fill the entire universe with a sense of the greatness and goodness of God and His Son, insomuch that every single living thing bursts out in involuntary praise and thanksgiving. It is clear that these beings are seeing something in the opening of the book, in this “Investigative Judgement” that we human beings have not fully understood. Nevertheless, as we continue to study, let it be with the intention of building on the foundation already laid. Let it be with the desire to obtain a clearer understanding without destroying what is already established. We may justifiably claim that we have only a limited understanding of the Investigative Judgement. We may claim that the issues are far more important and far reaching than we realize. We may conclude that we often place the emphasis on the wrong aspect of the judgement. We may determine that the

focus of many Adventists has turned the doctrine into an irrelevant, legalistic appendage. However, when the biblical evidence is carefully considered, we must conclude that those who deny the reality of an end-time, pre-advent judgement of Christians are guilty of denying the plain teachings of Scripture.

The Investigative Judgement separates the wheat from the tares, the good fish from the bad, the wolves from the sheep, the naked from the clothed. This is a Scriptural emphasis. Here, the focus is on a purging of Israel, the removal of what is impure and corrupt. The reality of this process is that some will have to go. Undoubtedly it will be a terrible experience for the living who pass through it. To see loved ones swept away from the truth, to see them choose a course which we know means they are forever lost will be more dreadful than we can imagine. However, the Bible gives us another perspective of this judgement which is worth considering.

In Daniel 7:22, when speaking of this judgement, the Bible says that judgement was “given to” the saints of the Most High. The margin suggests that this means that judgement was made in favor of God’s people. This is a comforting perspective. A number of persons have confessed that the concept of the investigative judgement has filled them with fear and uncertainty. They seem to have viewed the whole process as though God were looking for an excuse to exclude them from heaven. Here we see another angle. Judgement is made “in favor of” the saints. Here we see the judgement as a process in which God’s people (His true people) are vindicated. Therefore, while the hypocrites need to be afraid of the Investigative Judgement, what about those who truly belong to Christ, who are truly born again? Why should we be afraid of being examined if we know that we are truly Christ’s? Isn’t it His duty to perfect us? Isn’t it His job to prepare us for His judgement? It is comforting to see that His aim is not to see how many He can push out, but that the main purpose of the judgement is to pass sentence “in favor of” the saints. This same truth is brought out in the examination of the souls under the altar in Rev 6: 9, 10 where, white robes are given unto these dead people. Here again we see a

judgement being made in their favor.

As we stated before, the judgement of the dead is somewhat irrelevant to those who are alive. Somewhat, but not entirely. The knowledge of such an event is one way in which God alerts us to the time in which we live. It is a forerunner of the judgement of the living, an event which is of critical importance to every person living upon the earth. Over and over in the Bible God warns us of the need of special preparation for this event. The judgement is one event. It all takes place during the same period of time, but in different phases. God in His infinite mercy always warns us of coming distress and appeals to us to make the necessary preparations to survive it. Therefore God warns of this event and urges His people to prepare for it. (Rev 14: 6-12; Joel 2:1; Lev 16: 29,30)

#### IS THIS TEACHING CONTRARY TO THE GOSPEL?

Does the concept of an Investigative Judgement deny justification by faith? Does it remove a Christian's confidence in his salvation? Is it contrary to the gospel? In essence, the Investigative Judgement is simply a process by which the genuine children of God are separated from the pretenders. This separation takes place among the dead as well as the living. Can any person who has the slightest knowledge of the Scriptures deny these facts?

The main problem, I believe, is opposition to the idea that this judgement is based on examination of a person's works. Let us examine the plain, incontrovertible teachings of God's word and see whether there is any difficulty.

(a) Salvation is entirely the gift of God, freely bestowed upon us by grace through faith alone. Not of works, but rather "without the deeds of the law" (Rom.3:28).

(b) Faith saves us. But how is genuine faith discerned by those who do not possess the omniscience of God?

*He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (1 John 2:4)*

*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. (Mat 7:20)*

*Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith*

*without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. (James 2:18)*

Faith, according to the plain, unmistakable word of God, is discerned, or known by the things we do, (our fruits) by our works, and even by the words which we speak. In the parable of the wheat and tares Jesus shows us that even angels cannot tell the difference between some of the good and some of the bad until the fruit, or the works are revealed in the "time of the harvest."

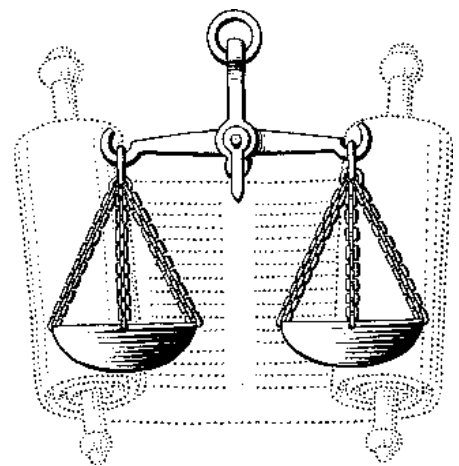
(c) Any judgement cannot be for God's benefit, since He already knows all things. Nevertheless, the Bible clearly, beyond controversy speaks of judgement over and over. For whose benefit, For God's? No, it is evident that some beings apart from God need to see the results of a judgement, therefore we all agree that there is reason for some kind of judgement, and that this judgement is for the benefit of somebody other than God.

(d) Since the judgement (in any form) is for the benefit of limited beings, then it goes without saying that the judgement cannot be on the basis of God's knowledge or foreknowledge. God cannot say in the judgement, "this man is saved because I know it to be so" or "this man is lost because I know it to be so." No. God's foreknowledge is not in question. If limited beings need to see a judgement, then it is obvious that this judgement needs to be on the basis of evidence which they can see, assess and measure. It must be on the basis of hard facts which leave no room for question. The works or deeds of man are the only standard by which finite beings may assess the reality of a person's Christian experience.

Millions who profess to be Christians are not. Many more millions died in that state with the only person knowing their true condition being God. These people made a profession of faith. They claimed to be Christians. They accepted (or claimed to accept) justification by faith. They professed to have been saved by faith in Christ and faith alone. The words of Jesus make it clear that "many" persons will be lost who make these claims (Matt.7:21-23). Did these people truly trust in Christ? Evidently not. Did they **profess** to trust in Christ? Clearly they did. What is it then, that makes the difference between those

who profess faith and are **saved**, and those who profess faith and are **lost**? The answer, according to Jesus, is the works or the deeds which they did; the fruits which they bore.

The question is, does God **Himself** make the distinction between those whose faith is genuine and those who are only professors based on His own personal knowledge of all things, or does He permit His family in heaven to participate in the process of determining who are the true candidates for heaven and who are the imposters? Does God alone make the decisions based on His own absolute knowledge of all things, or is the universe organized in such a way that His rational creatures participate in the administration of things? In answering this question please consider this: At some point books are opened which unveil the life records of men, or some classes of men if you prefer. The point is not **when**. The point is, **why** is it necessary at ANY point, since God knows all things? Why not just punish the wicked on the basis of God's own personal omniscience? Why open books? For whose benefit? God's? No. The evident answer is that there is somebody other than God for whose benefit there is a record of the lives of men contained in books. It is for the benefit of these beings that the books are opened, whether in Daniel 7:9,10, Revelation 5 or Revelation



20. The point is, if somebody needs to see the evidence in books at some point (regardless of the fact that God already knows all things), why is it considered ridiculous that all the records should be examined, rather than just some of them?

There is no question that many Christians

are scared to death of the idea of a judgement based on works. Why is this so? Can it be that they are fearful of what a close examination of their life's record might reveal? Can it be because they know deep inside that they have not truly repented of their sins? Can it be that they are more willing to cling to their sins than to believe that Jesus is able to remove sin from our lives entirely? If genuine faith brings the genuine presence and power of Christ into my life, why should I be afraid of an examination to determine whether or not Christ is really at work in my life? Does a man need to be afraid of judgement if he already has salvation? The fact is that no genuine Christian will ever be lost. Jesus said that such persons have already passed from death to life (John 5:24). While it is true that such a person may willfully choose to go back to the life of sin and death, yet as long as he maintains his hold on Christ, he will never come into condemnation. (Isa. 54:17; Ps. 7:8; Ps. 26:1). Christ is able to "save to the uttermost them that come unto God through Him" (Heb. 7:25). Christ is "able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory..." (Jude 24). Every Christian who has truly been born again will be declared righteous in the judgement. Their righteousness is of Christ and their works prove it.

Let us just consider an imaginary scenario. A wife wants to know whether or not her husband has cheated on her and hears of a remarkable new lie detector which is guaranteed to give a truthful result. She tries to persuade her husband to take the test. Now a husband may justifiably object to being required to prove his faithfulness, but does he need to be *afraid* to take the test if it is guaranteed to be accurate? Think about it. Which husband would be afraid to take the test? Only the guilty one. He would be afraid of what the test would reveal. The one who had not cheated might be unhappy at his wife's paranoia but he would have no fear of the test itself.

The point is, why should a person who has truly accepted Christ and who knows that his relationship with Christ is real, be afraid of an examination to determine whether or not his faith in Christ is genuine? The only person who needs to be afraid is the hypocrite. (Isa. 33:14) The person who knows deep inside that he does

not know Christ. "*They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him.*" (Titus 1:16)

The plain, simple truth is that if there is no investigative judgement then God must either save ALL who profess to have faith, saint and hypocrite alike, or must Himself, decide without offering one bit of evidence, those Christians who will be lost and those who will be saved.

#### IMPUTED VS IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

One of the chief objections to this doctrine is that it teaches that man is saved by a righteousness within him (even if imparted by Christ) rather than by a righteousness within Christ which is imputed to the believer. In other words, I am saved by faith in what Christ did and what He is. My salvation is in Him, and God saves me for His sake, not because of what I am, or what I have become, but because of who Christ is and what He has done. All that is necessary on my part is faith. All that is needful is that I believe what God has done for me in Christ. This is my passport to eternal life.

There can be no denying the truth that this is the clear Biblical means by which salvation comes to us. The critical issue however, is not the question of *how* men are saved. That is beyond controversy. The issue is really this: How can it be demonstrated that a person has truly received salvation? That a person truly believes in Christ? That a person has truly been born again and has Christ living within? This is the critical question which God must answer for the universe and He has only two possible ways of doing it.

(a) Either He himself must make the decisions without offering any proof except that, "this person claimed to have faith." (what about those who made the same claim and yet are lost?)

(b) Or He must open up their lives before the universe in an investigation which will demonstrate on the basis of their works that their faith was real.

#### OBJECTIONS

At this point the question may be asked, "what about those followers of Christ who are already in heaven? what about Enoch, Moses, Elijah and even those who were taken to heaven after the resurrection of Christ? If the Investigative Judgement did not begin until the time of the end (1844) and is necessary before a person's destiny

is decided, how then could God have taken these people to heaven thousands of years ago? We might well ask, "how is it that Moses was raised from the dead and taken to heaven before the appointed time of the resurrection? How come some people received the Holy Spirit before Pentecost? The point is that there are specific appointed times, ordained by God for the major events in the plan of salvation. The death of Christ, the return of Christ, the resurrection of the righteous dead as well as the unrighteous dead, the judgement in its various phases etc. All these are ordained by God to occur at particular times and occur, at the exact time appointed of God. Does this mean that there cannot be individual exceptions to the rule? Does this mean that there are not times when heaven makes an exception and acts outside of its timetable? This point hardly needs to be proved.

Enoch was taken to heaven thousands of years before the general appointed time for the children of earth to be delivered. Moses was resurrected and taken to heaven long before the general resurrection of the just. In the same way, why is it difficult to accept that the lives of these men were examined before the general time of the investigative judgement?

#### AN APPEAL

My dear brothers and sisters I urge you to carefully examine the biblical evidence again. This truth is too plainly taught to be missed. How can we reject something which is so evidently taught in the word of God, and why should we? What good reason is there for the enmity which is often manifested towards this doctrine? God desires us to be united. This is also the aching desire of my heart. But it cannot be on the basis of anything other than God's truth. Let us re-examine our positions carefully in the light of the Scriptures and see if we cannot conclude that unity can be achieved upon the basis of a united acceptance of this, and all other biblical truths.



*Truly, when the day of judgement comes, we shall not be examined as to what we have read, but what we have done (Matt. 25); not how well we have spoken, but how we have lived. (Thomas A' Kempis)*

# GOD'S ANOINTED IN EXILE

*David Clayton*

One of the most vexing questions and perhaps the one which causes the greatest degree of polarity and separation among the Independent Ministries is the question of what our relationship should be to the organized SDA church. Most of us are already familiar with the various arguments presented by both sides and it may not be necessary for me to here go back over most of the points. Let it suffice to say that while one group is convinced that on the basis of the writings of Sister White they ought to maintain membership in, and a working relationship with the organization, as well as continue to support it with their tithes and offerings, the other group is equally convinced that neither the Bible nor the writings of Sister White encourage us to remain joined to a system which is in open apostasy, on all fronts. In fact, they would see strong reasons, and even direct instructions to separate completely from such a system, and to stop supporting it in any way whatsoever.

If there were an easy way to resolve both points of view, then no doubt the issue would have been settled long ago. To each person, his own perspective seems absolutely plain, and he is amazed that those on the other side could be so blind and hard-hearted that they should fail to see what seems so plain to him. Well, what is the truth? "They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," and the attitude of the true learner in the school of Christ is that having found the truth he is ever seeking for a higher understanding of truth; a more perfect revelation of the way of God so that He may represent Him more perfectly.

In praying over this question recently, I was moved to look at the story of David and Saul and to compare the attitude of David with the attitude of the reformers in the SDA church today.

First of all, let us notice that Saul had been chosen of God. He had been anointed by the prophet of God, Samuel. One in whom was the Spirit of Prophecy. When Saul came to the throne it was with the solemn declaration proclaimed in the presence of the people, "See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen!" (1 Sam.10:24) However, in spite of the fact that God had cho-

sen Saul and had anointed him through a prophet, the day came when God had to reject Saul as king, and the same spirit of prophecy which had announced his choice as king, decreed of Saul, "The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day..." (1 Sam.15:28)

Now notice something: God had rejected Saul that very day. From that moment He no longer had God's blessing, but even so God did not immediately remove him from the seat of power. For 23 more years Saul continued to lead Israel, becoming more and more diseased in mind and spirit as the devil gained complete control of his being. Yet, though Saul sat on the throne of Israel, it was not the duty of those who were loyal to Jehovah to either support him, or follow him. "Turn again with me," said Saul to Samuel, "that I may worship the Lord." But Samuel's reply was, "I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord..." "And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul." (1 Sam. 15:25,26,35)

There were those then, who continued to follow Saul, no matter what. Was he not the Lord's anointed? In their narrow minds they could not see that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king ." (1 Sam. 15:23) What was the consequence of this blind loyalty to Saul? The consequence of this failure to discern the mind of God? Well, simply that Israel followed after Saul in cruelly and unreasonably persecuting the true anointed of the Lord. People who had never known David, who had no reason for hating him, knew only that Saul was hunting him and that was reason enough for them to betray him to Saul at every opportunity (1 Sam.23:19). Some, like Jonathan, who knew that God had chosen David to be king, yet stayed with Saul from filial loyalty. Love for Saul made him stay, even when he had become convinced that Saul was mad; even when he knew without a doubt that God no longer was with Saul. Jonathan was a good man, but blindly loyal, and he perished with Saul and a

great multitude of Israelite men on Mount Gilboa, defeated by the enemies of Jehovah, the Philistines, because they followed a leader from whom the Spirit of God had departed.

There is a time when failure to support a cause, or a man, or a system constitutes rebellion against God. There is another time when supporting that same cause, or man or system means disloyalty to God. The child of God will know what God requires of him, moment by moment, as people, systems, organizations and times change, but God remains the same forever.

And what may we say of David's attitude? Outlawed, disgraced, robbed of wife and home, hounded from place to place by a powerful lunatic who was obviously possessed of an evil spirit, what was his philosophy concerning Saul?

"The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD's anointed ." (1 Sam.26:11) There was nothing which Saul could do which could make him seek to harm, or to destroy Saul. His feeling was that God Himself would deal with Saul in His own appointed time (verse 10). This did not mean that David was willing to support Saul in any way. It did not mean that Saul did not deserve to be destroyed, but David's reverence for God was so great that he would not lay his hand upon what had been once touched by the hand of God.

David's attitude should be ours today, as sincere believers in the third angel's message who have been persecuted, disfellowshipped and disgraced by the "Saul" of today. Distressed by the rebellion of Saul, we "mourn" for Saul as did Samuel. Hounded and persecuted, short of supplies, dwelling even in the "wilderness", yet we refrain from seeking to destroy Saul, even when he is in our power, "lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph." Our duty, as David's was, is to fight the battles of the Lord. Though David was short of supplies, though his army was made up of discontented rabble, yet David never lost a battle while he was in exile. His rag-tag band of men defeated

*continued on page 10*



## A Sampling of our mail

I was given a tract, and a fine study of "Who is the Antichrist?" in the tract you said that I should write for the tract entitled "The Mark of The Beast" could you please send that tract to me? ... Here is a \$10.00 donation for now. Please send an index of materials and tracts that you have available.

*Ohio, USA*

Thank you for the tape on the Certainty of Adventism. We enjoyed it on Sabbath.

*Illinois, USA*

Just a few lines to let you know that we received your cassette and enjoyed listening to it. We two are staying at home Sabbath after Sabbath praising the blessed Lord in Spirit and in truth. Sometimes we are like the Ethiopian eunuch in need of a Philip, but Jesus knows best, and He is our comforter and our guide ... enclosed you will find \$500.00 (US \$12.50) which is not even a drop in the bucket, but little is much when the dear Lord is in it.

*St. James, Jamaica*

I always deeply appreciate the fervor of your dynamic presentations, but I must confess that I miss a great deal because you speak at times with machine-gun-like rapidity and I find I cannot perceive what you are saying... do all Jamaicans speak so rapidly?

...Anyway I appreciate what I do hear and understand...

*Alabama USA*

*Editors note: We will try by God's grace to work harder on this aspect of our presentations. DC*

Just a short note to tell you how much I enjoy your sermons on tape. You touch on subjects which we do not hear from the SDA pulpit...you are constantly in our prayers

*Montana USA*

What do you do with John 1:1; 8:58; Phil. 2:6 and many more verses saying the Holy Spirit spoke, wept, grieved, loved, restrained, constrained Acts 16:6,7 and many more verses re the Holy spirit showing He is a person and not merely an "influence" or "force"?

I grieve for you brother David. You are deceived and influenced by a person who

hates the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit & etc.

Please remove my name from your mailing list.

*Alabama, USA*

Thank you for the tapes. We really appreciate your messages. I have made about five or more sets of tapes, (The Omega, What God has Revealed, The Love of God and Who is this God). I give them out like that in that grouping. I have three new families who are listening. I am always surprised at the strong resistance to believing the truth about God. They always quote texts that really prove nothing and disregard the plainest texts it seems.

*California, USA*

It is disappointing that some after they have been enlightened no longer believe this. We are not a large movement but I really believe since this is the real truth that this is the real remnant of God. I also believe that the time is really soon when we will all be tested and will be gold tried in the fire.

May God bless you all. I'm sending a money order. Keep on trusting.

*Illinois, USA*

First I must say congratulations to you for the good works your people are doing. I have received three powerful tracts which you have published, namely *The Mark of The Beast, Religious Deception, and Why Not Talk To God About The Sabbath*. I am asking you very kindly if you could send me 200 each of these tracts. Let us know what the cost is. Keep up the good work.

*St. Elizabeth, Jamaica*

I really profited much spiritually from the tape I listened to on the subject of the trinity entitled, "Omega Series no.3" Can you possibly send me nos. 1&2 and any other additional information?

*Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.*

Thank you for sending the Sanctuary video...I would be willing to receive some of your back issues of *With Open Face* and also to be put on your mailing list ...Do you also have a web site that you publish your information from? Please tell me if you have, or are setting up one. Also tell me if you keep yourself & your small

group at Restoration Ministries independent or if you are attached to the SDA TAGNET services.

Good courage in all your efforts; this subject is the very one to be engaged in with the whole heart.

*Quebec, Canada*

I received your letter and the tapes, also the booklet. It was a pleasure hearing from you. Your message has been a blessing.

I haven't turned over to the Sabbath as yet but I have learned a lot of things from you and I have shared them with my co-workers. I lent them the tapes. I am sure your message will spread even more.

May God bless you my brother as you continue to do your good work.

*Clarendon, Jamaica*

My husband and I are non-trinitarian, do not believe in the "God Does not kill" theory, that the feast days, sacred name and head covering is not for us today and that proper Christian music is not heard too often. We are learning more about Bible prophecies and the sanctuary message.

We get your tapes from Arizona. Very interesting and most helpful to improve our understanding. We just listened to, "The Meat That Endureth." Could you please send me the list of references which you handed out when giving that sermon?

Finished reading your paper on "Roots of The Trinity" – very well done.

Your paper and tapes are very much appreciated. May God bless you with health and courage to continue in His service.

*Colorado, USA*

I want to thank you for the newsletter that you have been sending me. The February 2000 issue was especially interesting and helpful. It will go a long way to discredit the theory that brother X is spreading around!

I listened to a tape he gave me, and I must admit that the thought that the two compartment sanctuary with the torn curtain is in the mind was very appealing at first. I can understand how our people were, and still are being enticed by Desmond Ford.

*Florida, USA*

We have noticed that some of the brethren might be giving up the message on the

sanctuary, but we assure you that the Philadelphia Shabbat Advent Church will never depart from the true foundational principles of the church of Christ. These truths have been clearly declared from 1844 through 1914, by the pioneers of the Seventh Day Adventist church. So we hold that there is a Most Holy Place in the Heavenly Sanctuary, where Christ is now accomplishing the Day of Atonement.

Our studies for Sabbath School is the book of Hebrews which clearly shows the shadow being the earthly, and the real sanctuary, as being the heavenly.

We have received a copy of the *Roots of the Trinity*, and thank God for this material. We are making copies, and sharing it up with brethren. We hope that you might be able to come for a weekend or even a week to hold a series in Miami. I will be calling you personally to talk of these things.

May God the Father and His Son, bless you and your church continually.

*Florida, USA*

I must address my tardiness in acknowledging the article you sent me on "What is the Church", responding to Ty Gibson's study. Thank you so much. Having said that I must now thank you too for your excellent Newsletter which I received today. I received a blessing from reading all articles and I was particularly interested in the comments of O.R.L. Crosier on the subject of the Day of Atonement.

Julia Joy Russell has just sent me another 6 tapes (my "fix"). Praise God that He is blessing so many through your ministry.

*Australia*

I have received your tape and also the booklet. Thanks very much for all these. It is a blessing to my family and others. I do know that the Lord will continue to bless your ministries.

*St. Elizabeth, Jamaica*

I must just write to you and tell you that a sister in the USA sent me a copy of your tape 'The Presence of God', and I want to tell you what a blessing it was to me. It is a very POWERFUL message and I want to copy lots of them to share with people.

So I praise God that He has given you that particular angle, and gave you His Spirit to present it in such a powerful way.

*Victoria, Australia*

## GOD'S ANOINTED IN EXILE

*continued from page 8*

the enemy in every battle, and all Israel knew even if they did not admit it openly, that the one chosen of God was David.

We ask ourselves the question: For what purpose was the SDA movement raised up by God? Was it not to preach the three angels' messages to all the world? Yes, and the need of the world, for the message is very great. There is need for urgency in the presentation of the message. Yet, it is the feeling of those who see the apostasy of the church, that these messages are no longer being preached by the organized body. Therefore they see it as their duty to spend their energies and resources in seeking to persuade the church to turn around. Yet, I feel that this is to miss the mark. Let me illustrate how this kind of reasoning really appears to me.

Suppose that a great epidemic breaks out in a certain area: Two men are sent with a box of medicine which is the only hope of survival for the people in that area. Without this medicine, it is certain that all will perish. As they are driving along at breakneck speed in an effort to get help to that area before it is too late, one of the men suddenly decides to stop to watch a football match. All the efforts of the other man to persuade him to return to his mission are in vain. He becomes engrossed in the game and refuses to move until it is over.

Meanwhile, back in the village, people are dying like flies. What is the other man to do? It seems to me that his duty is clear. He must leave the other man to his game. He must grab the box of medicine and run with it. The apostasy of his friend has not lessened the urgency of his mission one iota. I will go even further: Should the man who stops to watch the football match be supported with any of the resources entrusted to these men? For example, should he be left with the car while the other man runs on on foot? The point I am making should be very clear. While the illustration may fall short in some areas, yet in the main, it serves to show the situation as it really is today.

In 1844 God raised up a people to give a message to the world which was of vital importance. A message which was His last merciful appeal to mankind. Is there still

an urgent need for it today? Does God love the perishing ones as much today as He did in 1844? Is there as much need for urgency now, as there was back then? Surely you see what I mean! We are a hundred and fifty years down the stream of time, and the work is nowhere nearer being finished now than it was a hundred years ago. In fact, it is probably further behind than then, inasmuch as the movement has lost its momentum, while the population of the world has multiplied several times over since then.

*"This is no time for the messengers of God to stop to prop up those who know the truth, and who have every advantage. Let them go on to lift the standard and give the warning, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him..'"* (Testimonies to Ministers - p.233)

### The Time has Come

The time has come to tell the masses  
That Jesus Christ our Saviour lives;  
Of how He loves us like a Father  
and of the spirit that He gives  
The time has come to take the message  
To those who'll never be the same;  
To many bound by false religion,  
To those who've never heard His name

From Macedonia the call is sounding  
In Istanbul the people wait;  
The countless children of Peking, China,  
The thirsting souls of Uruguay.  
The time has come to go to Boston,  
Salt Lake, Nashville, to Abilene;  
Yes, from LA to New York City  
And every county inbetween.

The time has come to tell the nations,  
the time has come to spread the word;  
In every town we must confess it;  
We must reveal our precious Lord..  
The time has come, we must not waste it;  
The time has come to sound the news.  
It is for every single nation,  
We cannot wait, the time has come.

***Live today as you will wish  
you had lived when you  
stand before God.***

# NEW DEVELOPMENTS

## New Meeting House

For the past fifteen years the brethren in the Mandeville area have resisted the suggestion that there was the need to build a meeting house. Somehow the warmth and fellowship of meeting in a home church seemed to have an appeal that we were loath to relinquish. Sometimes, however, circumstances have the last word and this proved to be the case. A few weeks ago we found it necessary to begin building a meeting house capable of accomodating the growing numbers who sometimes congregate in and around Brother Bill's home for Sabbath worship. The new meeting house, still in the process of being built should be able to hold close to a hundred people.

On Sabbath, February 19, 2000 we had our first meeting in the unfinished building with Pastor Allen Stump of West Virginia being our guest speaker for the day. This first meeting gave us an intimation that perhaps we may soon have to think of doing something else, for the chapel was unable to house all those who came that day and a number of persons had to find seats on the outside!

We wish to use this means of expressing publicly our appreciation to our Father for His guidance and provision. Our sincere thanks also to all those who have contributed in one way or another to this project, even if it was only by means of your prayers and well wishes.



**The meeting house in Mandeville under construction.**

## New Couple

Sunday February 27 was a high day for Debbie Finley and Gideon Clayton (Jnr.). Debbie and Marlon (Gideon) were married in a simple ceremony at New Hall in the presence of friends and relatives.

We wish them a life of happiness in which committment to God and His truth may be the governing principle.

## New Web Site

By the grace of God through outstanding assistance from Pastor Allen Stump and the brethren at Smyrna Gospel ministries, we are pleased to announce that Restoration Ministries now has a witness on the world-wide web. This website may be found at <http://www.restorationministry.com>.

All the back issues of our newsletters are available for reading or downloading from the site as well as the tracts and booklets which we have available. In addition we have a listing of our audio and video tapes. All three tapes of the godhead series may be listened to simply by clicking on the appropriate button.

Frankly, we had no idea that so much was involved in setting up this website. However, when we mentioned our desire to do so, the brethren at Smyrna responded immediately by sending Allen here with all the necessary software and knowhow. At the end of ten hectic days we were up and running though there were a couple of glitches, Which Allen was able to iron out upon his return to the USA.

We are truly thrilled at this new avenue for witness. We praise our Father for the open door and wish to say an especial word of heartfelt thanks to Allen Stump and the brethren of Smyrna who made it possible.

## New Witnessing Tool

On Wednesday March 1, 2000, a small audience gathered at the PCJ Auditorium in Kingston to witness the launching of Brother Colin Gyles' latest book, "Upon This Rock." This book is the result of a sincere, earnest, and candid effort to explore the Biblical concept of the church. The back of the book reads:

*"But what is this mysterious entity-The Church, over which individuals hold such diverse, yet unyielding passion? From the divine perspective, is it a national establishment, the great cathedral or the various denominations? What does the Bible say on this matter?"*



While the findings in this book may not be agreeable to the popular institutional church groups, its message is of vital importance! Brother Colin has, as usual, been meticulous in backing up his propositions with solid evidence from the Bible, history, and contemporary events. This book is a valuable witnessing tool and a welcome new weapon in the fight for the restoration of truth. Copies of this book may be obtained by writing to:

Colin Gyles, C/O God's Love, P.O. Box 542, Kingston 10, Jamaica W.I.

## **KEEP AT YOUR WORK**

The Lord has given to every man his work. It is his business to do it, and the Devil's business to hinder him if he can. So sure as God has given you a work to do, Satan will try to hinder you. He may throw you from it; he may allure you by worldly prospects, he may assault you with slander, torment you by false accusations, set you at work defending your character, employ pious persons to lie about you, and excellent men to slander you. You may have Pilate and Herod, Annas and Caiaphas, all combined against you, and Judas standing by to sell you for thirty pieces of silver; and you may wonder why all these things come upon you. Can you not see that the whole thing is brought about through the craft of the devil to draw you off from your work and hinder your obedience to God?

Keep at your work. Do not flinch because the lion roars; do not stop to stone the devil's rabbits. Do your work. Let liars lie, let sectarians quarrel, let corporations resolve,

let editors publish, let the devil do his worst; but see to it that nothing hinders you from fulfilling the work God has given you. He has not sent you to make money. He has not commanded you to get rich. He has never bidden you to defend your character. He has not set you at work to contradict falsehood which Satan and his angels may start to peddle. If you do these things, you will do nothing else. You will be at work for yourself and not for the Lord.

Keep at your work. Let your aim be as steady as a star. Let the world brawl and bubble. You may be assaulted, wronged, insulted, slandered, wounded and neglected. You may be abused by foes, forsaken by friends, and despised and rejected of men. But see to it with steadfast determination, with unfaltering zeal, that you pursue the great purpose of your life and object of your being, until at last you can say, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." (*H.M.S. Richards*)

## **AN ATHEIST'S POINT OF VIEW**

Did I firmly believe, as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of religion in this life influences destiny in another, religion would mean to me everything. I would cast away earthly enjoyments as dross, earthly cares as follies, and earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. Religion would be my first waking thought, and my last image before sleep sank me into unconsciousness. I should labour in its cause alone. I would take thought for the morrow of Eternity alone. I would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a life of suffering. Earthly consequences should never stay my hand, nor seal my lips. Earth, its joys and its griefs, would occupy no moment of my thoughts. I would strive to look upon Eternity alone, and on the Immortal Souls around me, soon to be everlastingly happy or everlastingly miserable. I would go forth to the world and preach to it in season and out of season, and my text would be, **WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL.**

### ***With Open Face***

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