

# American Union Newsletter

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH  
REFORM MOVEMENT  
International Missionary Society

Volume 26, No. 3

March 2010

## The Man in the Chair

Vision at Vohwinkel, Sabbath, May 28, 1887, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, pp. 123-127

Submitted by Pastor Oscar Valles, Riverside, California

Last night I dreamed that a small company were assembled together to have a religious meeting. There was one who came in and seated himself in a dark corner where he would attract little observation. There was not a spirit of freedom. The Spirit of the Lord was bound. Some remarks were made by the elder of the church and he seemed to be trying to hurt someone. I saw sadness upon the countenance of the stranger. It became apparent that there was not the love of Jesus in the hearts of those who claimed to believe the truth and there was, as the sure result, an absence of the Spirit of Christ and a great want, both in thoughts and feelings, of love for God and for one another. The assembling together had not been refreshing to anyone.

As the meeting was about to close, the stranger arose and with a voice that was full of sorrow and of tears, he told them that they had a great want in their own souls, and in their own experience, of the love of

Jesus which was present in large measure in every heart where Christ took up His abode. Every heart renewed by the Spirit of God would not only love God but love his brother, and if that brother made mistakes, if he erred, he must be dealt with after the gospel plan. Every step must be followed according to the directions given in the Word of God. “Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the

spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1), he said. “Rememberest thou not the prayer of Christ just before He left His disciples for His long, agonizing struggle in the garden of Gethsemane, before His betrayal, His trial, and His crucifixion? (See John 17:15-23.)

“Are you not forgetful of the sufferings of your Lord? Are you not forgetful of the estimate He has



placed upon man whom He has purchased with His own blood? You seem willing to wound and bruise the hearts of one another. Is this the pattern Jesus has given you? Where is His manner of dealing? Do you find yourselves sustained in having so little love and forbearance, so little patience for your brethren? Have you forgotten the words of Christ, 'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another?' (John 13:34, 35.) (John 14:21, quoted.)

"You are not cultivating love to God or love to your brethren. Be careful how you treat the purchase of the blood of Christ. There will be need of plain and faithful reproving of evil works, but let the one who takes this work upon him know that he is not separated from Christ by evil works himself. He must be spiritual and restore such an one in the

spirit of meekness. Unless he has this spirit he has no duty to reprove or to correct his brothers, for he would create two evils in the place of curing one.

"One condescended to clothe His divinity with humanity and came to our world in the likeness of men. He is the living fountain of life, the living manifestation of pure religion in our world. Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. There is but one Way, one Truth, and one Life, and they that believe in Him receive power to become sons of God, and these are no more in the world but are chosen out of the world. The

world knoweth them not because it knew Him not.

"The spirit and character of Christ are manifested in the chosen of God, by their heavenly conversation, their meekness, their blameless conduct. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. They are united to Christ as the branches are united to the one living vine. They walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. These are living examples of Christianity in the world. They are called Christians because they are like Christ and because Christ is in them. Of a truth they are the light of the world and the



salt of the earth. The help of the Spirit and the words of eternal life are their wisdom and their strength. And they are led into all truth because they are willing and obedient.

"That which distinguishes the character and conduct of Christians from all others is the principle of holy, Christ-like love, which works in the heart with its purifying influence. The true Christian will work the works of Christ in giving expression in deeds of love one to another. With this living, abiding, working principle in life and in character no one can resemble the world. If you know the character and

works of Christ you will know the disposition and conduct of Christians. Christ hated evil so much that sin and evil met a strong rebuke from His lips and from His example. While He hated sin He loved the sinner.

"Our Lord and Saviour loved every creature. He laid aside His dominion, riches, and glory and sought after us, sinful, erring, unhappy, that He might make us like Himself. He humbled Himself and took upon Himself your nature that He might be able to teach you to be pure, correct in character, and free from all impurity of sin, that you

might follow Him to heaven. He suffered more than any of you will be called to suffer. He gave all for you. What have you given to Jesus for this great love? Have you practiced the same toward your brethren? Have you copied His example in patience, in self-denial? You cannot equal the Pattern, but you can resemble it.

"There has been committed to you

the sacred knowledge of the truth, not for you to quarrel over and to become estranged from one another, but that you may be the light-bearers to the world. According to your individual ability will the Master reckon with you when He comes. What have you done to persuade men to accept the precious truth? All around you are those for whom Christ has died that they might be made pure, holy, and sinless. Have your works as Christians been fruitful and productive of much good? Have you in meekness and in faith tried to sow in the hearts of others the seeds of truth that they may bring forth fruits unto

righteousness? How much greater strength you might have had as sons and daughters of God if you had loved God supremely and your neighbor as you love yourself. How much higher ground you might stand upon if you had been following on to know more and more of the truth and gathering more and more divine light to shine forth in good works to all around you.

“Your works are not pleasing to God but pleasing to the enemy. You have lessons to learn in the school of Christ before you will be fitted for heaven. Your self, your ways, your sharp traits of character make you unskillful in dealing with minds and hearts. You are oppressive where you should be kind. Your words and your works are the channels through which the pure principles of truth and holiness are conveyed to the world. Then if you are not cultivating personal piety you cannot be the light of the world. If you allow yourselves to be dictatorial, accusing

and judging your brethren, and with unsanctified hearts and unholy tempers seeking to mend their wrongs, you do unskillful work and drive souls away from the service of Christ. The believers will be a source of weakness to one another in place of a source of strength and courage, unless they are truly abiding in Jesus. There can be no healthful building up, binding together principles, unless the transforming grace of Christ shall be felt upon your hearts and characters.

“Everyone who has a knowledge of Jesus Christ—especially the elders of the church—must not carelessly allow the members to be irregular in conduct and thus let evil and sin strengthen in the church, thinking this is the way to show love for one another. God requires faithfulness in watchcare. You must take hold of God with one hand while with the other hand, in love, you lay hold upon the erring and the sinner and draw them to Jesus. Pray with them,

weep with them, feel for their souls, love them, and never let go of them. This is the love Jesus has expressed for you. You must ever strive for unity and forbearance and love. Never draw apart, but press together, binding heart to heart and making supplications in the Spirit. Then the power of God will work in your midst and many souls will be brought to the truth through your influence.”

He was again seated and the sun, which had been hidden, beamed forth and shone full upon His person. What a revelation! All knew in a moment who had been speaking to them. They said one to another: “It is Jesus; it is Jesus!” and then such confessions of sins as were made and confessions to one another. There was weeping, for the hearts seemed to be broken, and then there was rejoicing and the room was filled with the mellow light of heaven. The musical voice of Jesus said, “Peace be with you.” And His peace was.

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## Christianity Is Not Genetic

News from the Education Department, by Margie Seely, AU Education Leader

If you were to peer closely into a riverbed in eastern Maine, you just might see genetics in action. Each year thousands of Atlantic salmon hatch peacefully there. Without a parent to guide them, they find small crustaceans to feed on for the first three years of their lives. At five or six inches in length, they voyage to the Atlantic Ocean. This in itself would be amazing enough.

But that’s not all. When these salmon are about five years old, they perform a feat even more remarkable. They swim upstream for miles on end, braving countless hardships and dangers, to return to the exact place they had hatched.

Once there, weak and exhausted, they dig nests and proceed to lay eggs. Why is this account so fantastic? Simply because these fish had no outside instruction. There was no one to tell them what to eat, how to live, or where to go. Everything they did to survive was already programmed into them. It was part of their genetic code.<sup>1</sup>

Ancient Jews and modern Christians alike have passively adopted the belief that their children’s spiritual lives are much like those of the Atlantic salmon. With minimal effort on the part of the parents, they expect their religious convictions to be adopted by their children. These parents

couldn’t be more wrong. The Israelites, for example, firmly believed that because they were of the seed of Abraham, they had a right to eternal life. John the Baptist sternly rebuked this belief. “O generation of vipers,” he thundered, “who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet to repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father.”<sup>2</sup>

Paul went on to admonish those deceived by Abraham’s haughty descendants, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ

hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? ... Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”<sup>3</sup> Christianity is not carried through the bloodline. Rather, its precious truths must be carefully taught by one generation to the next.

Raising children to love and honor God is the most awesome responsibility parents will ever face. So important is this work that God has given explicit instructions as to how it should be done. “And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words ... shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou *sittest* in thine house, and when thou *walkest* by the way, and when thou *liest* down, and when thou *risest* up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates”<sup>4</sup> (emphasis supplied).

These verses command action. We must teach and talk and write to bind the law and the love of God upon the hearts of our children during every moment of every hour of every day of every month of every year God grants us life. There are no vacation periods. No breaks. No excuses. Period.

U.S. law requires children to spend approximately 35 hours per week, 136 hours per month, 1,295 hours per year in a school setting. A public school student will, at the age of eighteen, graduate from approximately 15,540 hours (not including kindergarten or pre-

school) of Godless instruction. Compare this figure to the total amount of hours spent in Sabbath School during that same time (684 hours), and the difference is astounding. Which will have more of an impact on your child? It is, therefore, small wonder that God instructed us years ago to establish Christian schools for our children.

“In localities where there is a church, schools should be established, if there are no more than six children to attend. Work as if you were working for your life to save the children from being drowned in the polluting, corrupting influences of the world.

“We are far behind our duty in

localities would thus have had representatives of the truth who would have given character to the work of the Lord. Instead of centering so many large buildings in a few places, schools should have been established in many localities.

“Let these schools now be started under wise direction, that the children and youth may be educated in their own churches. It is a grievous offense to God that there has been so great neglect in this line, when Providence has so abundantly supplied us with facilities with which to work.”<sup>5</sup>

God never calls us to do anything He cannot help us do. He



this important matter. In many places schools should have been in operation years ago. Many

would never have commanded the Israelites to cross the Jordan if He were unable to open the waters.

Neither would He, if unable to destroy the world by flood, have directed Noah to build an ark. And God certainly would not have sent His Son to die if He weren't certain that the blood of Jesus would pay for our sins. So when God commands us to establish schools to instruct our children, why do we doubt His instructions? Why do we question His guidance? Why do we give Him excuses instead of obedience?

God asks us to trust Him no matter what the cost, and there is a cost. Sacrifices must be made to follow Christ. They may be financial or material. They may cut close to our hearts, but the rewards are incredible. If we are really willing to take God at His word and do what He has told us to do, then Christian schools would open

all over the world. Missionaries would be trained, like Samuel, from childhood on to carry the gospel into the darkest corners of the world. The work would come to a glorious finish. And Christ would come in majestic splendor to take His children, our children, home. Isn't that worth sacrificing for?

That which God has promised He will fulfill. For every doubt, every question, every uncertainty we have, He has an answer. "Some may ask, 'How are such schools to be established?'" We are not a rich people, but if we pray in faith, and let the Lord work in our behalf, He will open ways before us to establish small schools in retired places for the education of our youth."<sup>6</sup>

As parents, we desire ultimately to see our children walk across the heavenly streets of gold, clasp the hand of Jesus, and talk to Him as they would their closest friend. But we must fight to make that dream blossom into a reality. We must put away our excuses, step out in faith, and do *our* part.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."<sup>7</sup>

"With man it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Collier's Encyclopedia, vol. 20, p. 382.

<sup>2</sup>Matthew 3:7-9.

<sup>3</sup>Galatians 3:1, 7.

<sup>4</sup>Deuteronomy 6:5-9.

<sup>5</sup>Child Guidance, pp. 308, 309.

<sup>6</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 204.

<sup>7</sup>Hebrews 11:1.

<sup>8</sup>Mark 10:27.

## Three New Daughters—Our Adoption Journey

Margie Seely, Ione, California

Almost three years ago Shawn and I completed the last of the adoption paperwork, interviews, and classes necessary to be certified as prospective adoptive parents. We were finally given permission to go to the adoption agency and "choose" our children. Seated at a small desk, we looked through three binders filled with photos and descriptions of children who were in need of a family. Each little face was precious. Each story tugged at our hearts. How could we choose? We left the adoption office that day feeling overwhelmed and confused.

For about five months I continued going back to the office and looking at the books. We put in requests for several sets of children, but nothing seemed to work out. Then one day we were told we had been matched with a set of four children—three girls and a boy. We were overjoyed! But that was not to be either. Frustrated, we decided not to search any more but to leave it all in the Lord's hands. He would have to choose the children for us.



Soon afterward, we attended a picnic hosted by the adoption agency we worked with. An adoption worker approached us and said, "I have a set of three girls, ages 5, 3, and 18 months, who will be up for adoption soon. They are different races: Caucasian, Hispanic, and African-American. Would you be interested?" We *were* interested! Less than a month later, Andie (our daughter) and I excitedly drove out to pick up our new girls. Our journey had begun.

The next couple months were spent adjusting to a larger family. There were more laundry, cooking, and shopping to do. Baths needed to be given, bedtime routines had to be established, and the entire way we ran our household was scrutinized and revamped. But it was all worth it. We were thrilled with our new daughters!

While we were adjusting to them, another family was adjusting to their loss. The mother who had given birth to these girls had made a lot of mistakes. She had done things that were not right, but she still loved her daughters. She wanted to care for them and be their mother, but she just couldn't seem to rid herself of the bad habits that kept pulling her back. She knew her probationary time was running out and that the courts were getting ready to remove her parental rights. She began to pray that somehow, even after she lost her rights as their mother, she would still be able to have some contact with them.

About the same time, the oldest of the girls, Nikki, began to ask us questions. What was going to happen to her birthmother? Would Nikki be able to see her birthmom again? Did God love her? Could we tell her

about Jesus? Our hearts were touched by this little girl's concern for her birthmom. Although we had never met her ourselves, we began to pray for her as well. What was God's plan in all of this?

The days turned into months, and the months turned into years. We met the birthmother of the girls and other members of their biological family. Friendships between our families formed and grew. Slowly, we all began to see a little of the beautiful way God was working in all our lives.

On February 11, 2010, Nikki, Alyssa, Maya, Shawn, and I stood before the judge as she pronounced us "parents and children." While the girls clapped and cheered, Shawn and I wiped away tears. This had been a long journey for us. With God's help, we had not only adopted three precious daughters but opened our hearts to their birthfamily as well. Our journey continues....

***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways,  
and My thoughts than your thoughts."***

**Isaiah 55:8, 9.**

## 2010 CALENDAR

- **July: Canadian Field Conference**  
See [www.imssdarm-bg.org](http://www.imssdarm-bg.org) for more information.
- **August 18-22: Western Field Conference at Leoni Meadows, Grizzly Flats, California**

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