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Happy New Year!

Pastor Henry Dering, American Union President, Cameron Park, CA

My dear brothers and sisters, it is with a heart overflowing with thanks and praise to God that I wish for each of you a joyful and blessed 2011.

The psalmist David expresses his gratitude to God with these words, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come

before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever." Psalms 95:1-3; 107:1.

With the approach of the New Year, someone took an inventory of things to be thankful for:

1. *Be thankful for growing older. Not everyone gets this opportunity. Aging with health and grace is a rare and beautiful gift.*
2. *Be thankful that you can read these words. It is a very sad thing that many people do not have the ability to read.*
3. *Be thankful for the ability to pay your bills, even if it means that you have to give up some things that you want. Remember that having basic needs met is a luxury for many people.*
4. *If you have to get up before dawn to get to work, be thankful that you get to see another sunrise and have a job to go to. Think about what it would be like if you slept every day until noon and spent the*

rest of your waking hours wondering what to do with your life.

5. *When you're stuck in traffic, be thankful you have a car to get where you need to go and money to buy gas. Standing in the rain while waiting for a bus is, at the very least, uncomfortable.*

6. *When the kids are screaming at each other, be thankful that you have children to love and who love you; and remember that at least some of the time they do get along. There will always be bumps in the road, but they are usually followed by easier times.*

7. *When your mate is acting grumpy or giving you a hard time, be thankful for having love in your life, and someone to grow old with. A life partner is something that less than half the population has. Having your partner is a blessing that needs to be counted several times. –Taken from Psychology Today, November 17, 2009.*

My brethren and sisters, I hope and pray that we are truly thankful for our blessings.

As I look back on 2010, in spite of headlines bombarding us with news of political unrest, alarming economic predictions, tragic stories of human suffering, natural disasters, etc., I still have reasons to be thankful and happy. I can still see the rainbow in the clouds as evidence of God's great mercy and compassion for erring man.

Yes, the time in which we are living is serious and solemn. But the good news is that the world cannot continue



as it is much longer—it is on the verge of a stupendous crisis and the second coming of Christ!

Let us use the precious gifts of time and the freedom we still have to live lives of service and blessing to others to prepare for what is to come.

Let us be inspired and challenged by the following counsel, which was written by the pen of inspiration to the church in 1881 as a New Year's greeting:

“Another year now opens its fair unwritten pages before you. The recording angel stands ready to write. Your course of action will determine what shall be traced by him. You may make your future life good or evil; and this will determine for you whether the year upon which you have just entered will be to you a happy new year. It is in your power to make it such for yourself and for those around you.

“Let patience, long-suffering, kindness, and love become a part of your very being; then whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report will mature in your experience.

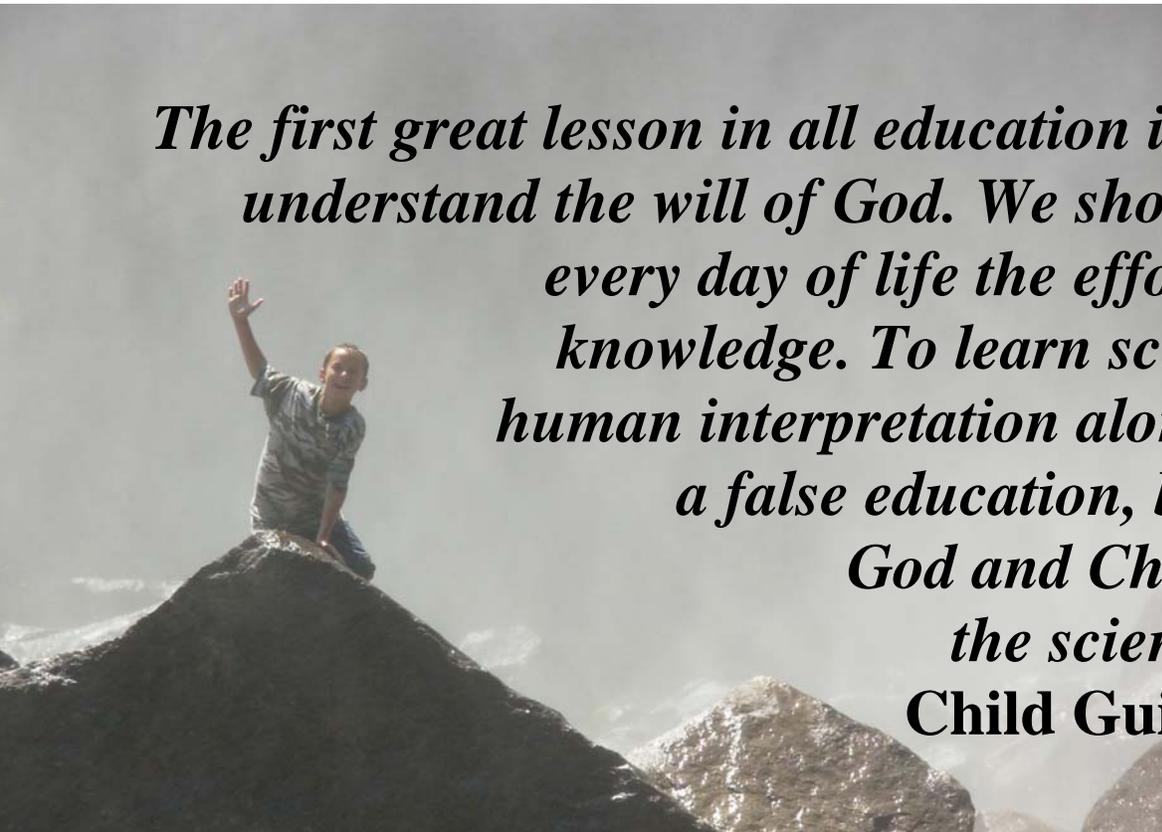
“Angels of God are waiting to show you the path of life.... Decide now, at the commencement of the new year, that you will choose the path of righteousness, that you will be earnest and true-hearted, and that life with you shall not prove a mistake. Go forward, guided by the heavenly angels; be courageous; be enterprising; let your light shine.” —*My Life Today*, p. 5.

Jesus Christ, the King of the universe, is coming soon to this earth with a host of angels to conquer evil and to destroy this sinful world; but, best of all, He is coming to take His children home!

Therefore, let us with hope and faith and love in our hearts prepare for this—the greatest event in earth's history!



The first great lesson in all education is to know and understand the will of God. We should bring into every day of life the effort to gain this knowledge. To learn science through human interpretation alone is to obtain a false education, but to learn of God and Christ is to learn the science of heaven.
Child Guidance, p. 293



Conference and Baptism Report from Miami

Pastor Jose V. Giner, Cedartown, GA

By the grace of God, I was able to attend the Southeastern Field Conference in Miami, Florida, on October 30 of this year. Believers assembled from several churches in Florida—specifically, Tampa, St. Petersburg, West Palm Beach, and Miami.

Our Sabbath meeting was blessed by the presence of more than forty people. Following Sabbath School, I presented the main service, speaking about the urgent need to give our hearts to Christ without waiting for tomorrow. Every day the Holy Spirit calls us and in mercy and love patiently awaits our answer. God longs for us to turn to Him. He wants to bless us abundantly here on this earth, as well as to give us eternal life in the world to come.

Following the church service, two little girls, Genesis and Katherine, were dedicated to the Lord.

After a fellowship lunch, we enjoyed a youth presentation. Led by Alex and Angelica, it was filled with songs and experiences. Also during this service, two dear young baptismal candidates were presented—Jorge Eliel Santos and his wife, Dayana Rosado. It was Sr. Ana Santos who had prepared these souls for baptism. We are very thankful for her work.

At the close of the meeting, we left Miami for Boca Raton and the home of Sister Ilse Dering, where I had the privilege of performing these two baptisms. On behalf of the Southeastern Field, I offered a warm welcome to this couple. It is my desire that their integration into the American Union will be a great blessing for them personally and to the community of believers as a whole. The baptismal service concluded with the Morán family presenting a very beautiful song which they dedicated to this newly baptized couple. Later, Pastor Ciro Arévalo offered a warm welcome to Br. Yosvani Castillo and his wife Beatriz Navarro, originally from the church in Cuba.

The day ended with a festive supper which combined tasty food with happy Christian fellowship. I would like to express my thanks for the great effort that went into organizing this conference. Also, a special thank you to the sisters who spent much time preparing the tasty, healthful meals we enjoyed.



Each day we should live as if we knew that this would be our last day on this earth. If we knew that Christ would come tomorrow, would we not crowd into today all the kind words, all the unselfish deeds, that we could? We should be patient and gentle, and intensely in earnest, doing all in our power to win souls to Christ.

In Heavenly Places, p. 355

The Church in Houston

Pastor Jose V. Giner, Cedartown, GA

I was privileged to travel from Atlanta to Houston, Texas, to assist with the election of officers at the church there. On Friday we were able to meet with a small group of believers to open the Sabbath. I was blessed to share a message about how our confidence must be in God so that His power and glory will be declared in our lives, just as it was with King Hezekiah when Sennacherib threatened to conquer Jerusalem.

Sabbath morning we were pleased to see approximately sixty people present, both members and visitors. The Spirit of God gave us much peace during the meetings.

During the Sabbath School service, Sister Eleida Castaño presented interesting information about the properties of oats. For the second service, I encouraged the congregation to consecrate their hearts to God, because communion with Him is the foundation for obtaining peace and, ultimately, sanctification. When we

establish a true, meaningful relationship with God, He gives us the marvelous joy of salvation.

Two little girls were dedicated during this service. Evelyn Noemi was presented by her parents, Evelyn and Juan Pablo, while Alexa Yoana, was presented by her parents, Armando and Edith.

The sisters of the church worked hard to prepare a healthful variety of delicious food, both for lunch and for supper.

After supper, I was again requested to encourage the believers with a message. I spoke about the necessity of working to perfect our characters. I presented the examples of Peter and John, who achieved a genuine conversion by totaling surrendering

themselves to Christ.

After sunset, I officiated at the election of officers. We thank God for the opportunity we have of advancing the work in this country, where we still have freedom.



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2010 - 2011 Calendar

- **December 17-18, 2010: Southeastern Field Conference in Cedartown, GA**
- **August 23-24, 2011: American Union Delegates' Meetings**
- **August 24-27, 2011: American Union Conference at Cohutta Springs Campground in Crandall, GA**

The *American Union Newsletter* is the official organ of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Reform Movement, American Union. It is published monthly, is complimentary for our members and friends, and carries items of interest submitted by church members. We reserve the right to make changes as necessary and to refuse to print certain items.

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