

Liberty of Conscience



A Gift Worth Preserving

By Walter O. McGill

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Introduction..... 1

The Two-Horned Beast..... 2

- The Persecution Principle 5

The Spirit of the Papacy..... 6

- Death and Life with Christ..... 7

The Gift of Individuality 9

- Christ’s Second Coming 12

The Religion of Human Nature (6-6-6) 13

- True Freedom..... 15

Persuasion vs. Compulsion 17

- American Founders on Religious Liberty 20

The Province of Civil Government 21

- Trust in God 22
- The Hour of God’s Judgment 23

The Abomination of Desolation..... 25

- Death to Self 28

The Wine of Babylon..... 29

- The Parable 32

The True Protestant..... 33

- Our Church Creed 36

The Question..... 37

The Creation 7th Day 42

The Conclusion 45

THE INTRODUCTION

The people of God will recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment and will teach obedience to it as a sacred duty within its legitimate sphere. Nevertheless, when its claims conflict with the claims of God, the word of God must be recognized as above all human legislation. “Thus saith the Lord” is not to be set aside for Thus saith the church or the state. The crown of Christ is to be uplifted above the diadems of earthly potentates.

The principle we are to uphold at this time is the same that the adherents of the gospel maintained in the great Reformation. When the princes assembled at the Diet of Spires in 1529, it seemed that the hope of the world was about to be crushed out. To this assembly was presented the emperor’s decree restricting religious liberty and prohibiting all farther dissemination of the reformed doctrines. Would the princes of Germany accept the decree? Should the light of the gospel be shut out from the multitudes that were still in darkness? Mighty issues for the world were at stake. Those who had accepted the reformed faith met together, and the unanimous decision was: “Let us reject the decree. In matters of conscience the majority has no power.”

The banner of truth and religious liberty which these Reformers held aloft has in this last conflict been committed to us. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word. We are to receive God’s word as supreme authority. We must accept its truths for ourselves. And we can appreciate these truths only as we search them out by personal study. Then, as we make God’s word the guide of our lives, for us is answered the prayer of Christ; “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.” (John 17:17) The acknowledgment of the truth in word and deed is our confession of faith. Only thus can others know that we believe the Bible.

Those Reformers whose protest has given us the name Protestant felt that God had called them to give the gospel to the world, and in doing this they were ready to sacrifice their possessions, their liberty, and their lives. Are we in this last conflict of the great controversy as faithful to our trust as were the early Reformers to theirs?

In the face of persecution and death, the truth for that time was spread far and near... We are to give the last warning of God to men, and what should be our earnestness in studying the Bible, and our zeal in spreading the light! [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 6, pp. 402, 403*]

THE TWO-HORNED BEAST

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth;
and he had two horns like a lamb, and he [spoke] as a dragon.” (Revelation 13:11)

THE UNITED STATES IN BIBLE PROPHECY

The first ten verses of Revelation, chapter 13, are concerned with the composite beast, symbolizing civil government as controlled by Satan in matters of religion. The particular phase of the beast presented in this section symbolizes the civil governments of the Roman world, represented by the horns, as dominated by the Papacy. This phase of the beast ended when the papal head received its “deadly wound,” in 1798, and its power to persecute came to an end.

At this time — when the papal power went into captivity — another power, symbolized by “another beast,” was seen “coming up,” having “two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.” A few specifications given of this beast of Rev 13:11 – 17 will serve to show what power it represents:

- 1) It is seen coming up just as the papal beast went into captivity, namely, at the close of the eighteenth century.
- 2) It comes up out of the “earth,” in comparison to the “sea,” out of which rose the ten-horned beast. “Sea,” or “waters,” as a prophetic symbol represents, according to Rev 17:15 and Isa 8:7, nations and peoples. The ten-horned beast gained its place through strife and conquest, while the two-horned beast came up out of the earth, a place unoccupied by civilized nations, in a peaceful fashion.
- 3) It is evidently a republican form of government, as the two horns are without crowns (while the ten horns are crowned), and verse 14 shows that the people have a part in its work.
- 4) It had two horns like a lamb. The lamb employed as a symbol represents prominently our Lord and Savior. (See John 1:29 and Rev 5:6) The government, therefore, represented by this beast would have characteristics, the very characteristics, represented by horns, which exalt it and give it power and prestige.
- 5) It has a dragon voice. The dragon represents primarily Satan, and Satan is the prime instigator of all persecution against the people of God. (Rev 12:13) According to the symbol, therefore, the power represented by the two-horned beast becomes an agent of Satan in persecuting the people of God. This is why John mentions it in the prophecy. The latter part of the chapter more fully describes this aspect.

In what power are all the above specifications fulfilled? There is but one in which they all meet, and that one is the United States of America. Note carefully the specifications above, and see how literally they are fulfilled in our own country.

1. When the persecuting power of the Papacy was taken away in 1798, there was but one great power of earth rising into prominence, and that was the United States. The representatives of the colonial governments signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The Constitution was effective in 1789, and the beginning of the nineteenth century found the ship of State fairly launched and recognized as a sister craft by the great nations of earth. There was no other power of prominence then rising.

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

2. This government did not arise out of the conquest of Old World nations, but it came up out of unoccupied territory up to this time. George Alfred Townsend, in his “New World Compared with the Old,” speaks of this country as “coming forth from vacancy,” and says, “Like a silent seed we grew into empire.” The Dublin (Ireland) Nation in 1850 spoke of this government as a wonderful empire, which was emerging, and “amid the silence of the earth daily adding to its power and pride.” The testimony of the historian confirms the interpretation of the prophecy.
3. This country is certainly a republican form of government, while most of the divisions of the Roman Empire were monarchies.
4. It “had two horns like a lamb,” two characteristics of the religion of Christ, two features peculiar to Christianity alone of all the great religions of the earth, and peculiar to this government alone of all the great powers of earth. This specification above all others fixes the symbol to this government.
 - a. What two characteristics, above all others, apart from its supernatural power — its real wealth and resources — gave to the religion of Christ power and influence?
 - b. What two characteristics above all others — apart from its wealth and resources — gave to this government its power and prestige?

The answers to these two questions are simple, easily found, and readily understood.

One prominent characteristic of Christianity is the EQUALITY OF MAN. It is thus most positively stated:

“There is no respect of persons with God.” (Rom 2:11)

“God that made the world and all things therein... hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” (Acts 17:24 – 26)

The same principle was to hold true in the Christian church:

“But be not ye called rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” (Matt 23:8)

A second great and prominent characteristic of Christianity is what we may call LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, or the right and privilege of every man to worship God, or not to worship, how or when he will, providing he does not interfere with the equal rights of his fellow-men. They sometimes term this principle “religious liberty.” The gospel of Christ *compels* no one. It is not “Thou shalt,” or “Thou shalt not.” Its language is, “Whosoever will,” “let him come.” (Rev 22:17)

Let us quote a chosen servant of the King of Heaven: “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray [entreat] you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we *persuade* men.” (2 Cor 5:20, 11)

And that resolute apostle who was once so ready to use carnal weapons, writes, “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts.” “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage.” (1 Peter 2:11; 5:3) How much different from the spirit and utterances of the great apostate church, which claims Peter as its head! “Not for that we have dominion [lordship] over your faith,” says Paul, “but are helpers of your joy; for by faith ye stand.” (2 Cor 1:24) Our Savior thus speaks: “And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world... The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” (John 12:47, 48) How different is all this from those apostate churches with their “lords spiritual,” their

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

councils and tribunals, sitting in judgment on men's consciences, and prosecuting by civil law those who do not agree with their decrees!

Look all over the religions of the past — pagan or Jewish, Mohammedan or so-called Christian (papal) — and in not one of them do we find these two particulars — the EQUALITY OF MAN and the LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE. The curse of caste, the creation of offices, haughty, imperious, and ambitious hierarchies, religious dogmas, enforced legislative enactments or royal edicts, one or all are present in all false religions, including all perverted forms of the Christian religion.

They embody both of these God-given principles in the charters of our liberty in this country, so far as they can be embodied in any earthly government. The first principle, equality of man, is found in that document which sounded the birth note of American freedom, and which made Americans free men pertaining to civil matters:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” [Declaration of Independence]

The second principle is not only embodied in the word “liberty” in the Declaration of Independence, but our forefathers built more surely than this. The first amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads: “Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

Thus in the fundamental law of this government, man's freedom to worship or not to worship God, or his conceptions of God, were preserved and protected intact. We know of no other country in the world having been established on these two eternal principles. These principles have been the magnetic power which has drawn to our shores, from the intolerant and autocratic governments of the Old World, the persecuted and oppressed millions. They found here religion “without a pope, and a State without a king,” and the privilege of worshiping God according to their own consciences and understanding of God's Word.

5. Sadly, we have seen demonstrations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of the dragon's voice excited against Sabbath-keepers and other “fringe” religious societies. The notable “persecution of a church” occurred in the siege and destruction of the Branch Davidian Seventh-day Adventists at Waco, Texas in 1993.

Ironically, later in the same year, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) was signed into law in our country. “As U.S. president Bill Clinton signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) in the idyllic setting of the White House rose garden on November 16, 1993, he mused that ‘the power of God is such that even in the legislative process miracles can happen.’ The president meant, of course, that he was signing into law the most important piece of religious legislation since the Bill of Rights. And this through an almost unthinkable coalescence of interest groups.” [*Adventist Review*, Dec. 9, 1993, p. 6]

“And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast...” (Rev 13:14) Yes, “miracles can happen” and even “through an

almost unthinkable coalescence of interest groups.” [i.e., Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and other secular organizations]. But keep ever mindful that “miracles” like these are not always performed by our Heavenly Father. Be not deceived!

“The Scripture cannot be broken,” (John 10:35) and Revelation, chapter 13, reveals that the United States, in alliance with the apostate church will be foremost in the final persecution of God’s commandment-keeping people. “National apostasy will end in national ruin.” Prepare now for that ultimate eventuality.

THE PERSECUTION PRINCIPLE

Two elements are *always* essential in order to have a persecuting power; and these two elements united *always* make a persecuting power. But if either of these is taken away, the power as a persecutor is destroyed.

1. The power must be religious or it will not persecute. A government which is in no way connected with religion will *never* persecute.
2. It must have power to enforce its religious positions — to punish what it considers to be heresy — or it cannot persecute. Methodists, Baptists, or any other church of the land is a good example. They may issue decrees and pronounce penalties, but they *cannot enforce* them.

This was the condition of the Papacy before 538 A.D. But when the bishops of the Roman Church became “head over all the churches” and “true and only corrector of heretics,” the Papacy came into existence as the ruling, controlling power — the head of the beast. It was given existence or life as a head by the existing government, the powers that be, the government of the empire granting it the authority to define and correct heresy. What made the Papacy a persecutor? Briefly answered, it was religion by law, or power to enforce religious decrees and to punish heretics, or those who disobeyed these decrees. Thus — The Persecution Principle.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PAPACY

It is a mistake to suppose that the Papacy is confined to the Vatican at Rome, or to the Roman Catholic Church. It is a mistake to suppose that the Papacy is confined to any organization, or to any territory. It is a mistake to suppose that it is confined to that which is papal in name. The Papacy is represented in everything, of whatever name, that exalts itself against God. And as all sin is rebellion against God, it is plain that the spirit of sin and the *spirit of the Papacy* are one and the same.

The Papacy is co-extensive with the system of opposition to God, and is not confined to any church, but is represented in every church where man is exalted in the place of God. And sad to say, there is no church on the earth where this self-exaltation is not to be found.

Rebellion against God began in heaven, under a leader, who was Lucifer, the “covering cherub.” This rebellion was transferred to the earth, but remained under its original leader, by whom it has been and is today carried forward. He is the invisible leader, and behind him is a world-wide “confederacy” of evil. This confederacy of evil is visibly led, in the final crisis and conflict, by the Papacy — the “Beast” in the Old World and the “Image to the Beast” in the New.

And as there is one great leader of this confederacy, so also there is one spirit pervading it throughout, and this spirit is the spirit of its leader. And therefore it is written of that power — the Papacy — that “all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev 13:8)

Whether we shall worship the “Beast” or not, is a question to be determined not by the church book, of whatever church, in which our names are inscribed here on the earth, but by their inscription in or absence from the life book in the courts of heaven.

There are true worshipers of God in the Roman Catholic Church; and there are followers of the papacy in the true Church of Christ.

We need particularly to understand and be on our guard against the exceeding subtlety of the papal spirit; and that not so much outside of ourselves as within our own hearts.

It is written of the papal power that “through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand.” (Dan 8:25) Deceptive craftiness has ever been a leading characteristic of the policy of Rome. Pretending to be disinterested and benevolent, Rome has always in her dealings with the nations aimed steadily at her own advancement. What seemed to be the touch of velvet, was later revealed to be the grasp of a hand of iron. The papacy has made all nations drunken with “the wine of the wrath of her fornication,” and like drunken men, they have been led by her whither she desired. This deceptive spirit deceived him with whom it originated; hence it is no wonder that it has been able to deceive others. Lucifer, the exalted angel who stood by the throne of God, and who was “full of wisdom,” did not understand the nature of the spirit which led him to exalt himself against God. He did not clearly perceive whither this spirit was taking him. It is not surprising therefore that under his influence and aided by his arts, it has prevailed over a multitude less wise than he, and is today leading fallen, finite men in its devious path.

The spirit of the Papacy shows itself in a struggle for the supremacy. This is the characteristic way in which it is manifested. Wherever there is strife in the church, wherever there is a contest among brethren, there is *the spirit of the Papacy*. Someone is being moved by the spirit of self-exaltation.

It was thus that this spirit showed itself among the apostles. And it is no slight evidence of its deceptive character that as they came up to the crisis in the earthly ministry of their divine Master, after they had so long been associated with Him and listened to His instruction, they were engrossed with schemes for their own selfish advancement. “There was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.” (Luke 22:24) James and John, having enlisted their mother in their selfish cause, came to Jesus and desired that He would promise them the two places of greatest honor in His kingdom. And the remaining disciples, when they heard of it, “began to be much displeased with James and John.” That was *the spirit of the Papacy*, and that this is so was later conclusively shown by the fact that this same contest for supremacy broke out again not many years later in the Christian Church, and continued with growing fierceness until out of it came the fully developed papacy itself, through a decree issued by the Roman emperor making the bishop of Rome head over all churches.

“Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” (Matt 20:25 – 27) This, Jesus said to the disciples, teaching them that the spirit which was moving them each to seek the position of supremacy and rulership over others was the spirit of the world, which was manifested among the Gentiles; but the spirit of Christianity was an opposite spirit; and wherever *this* spirit was shown, there would be seen a desire *not* to bring others into the service of self, but to bring self into the service of others.

The world is full of the contest for supremacy. The spirit of self-exaltation and lordship over others is the characteristic spirit of the world; but that spirit has no place in the Church of Christ. *THE SPIRIT of THE PAPACY* has no proper place among true Christians, and of all Christians, Seventh-day Adventists. May the time soon come when it will have not only no place of right, but no place in fact, among those who profess to be doing the closing work of God in the earth.

BABYLON SAYS: “...let us make us A NAME, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” (Gen 11:4b)

YAH SAYS: “...Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins...” (Rev 18:4)

DEATH AND LIFE WITH CHRIST

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” (Rom 6:8) The thought of living with Christ is a very precious one to every child of God. We read of Mary, who sat at his feet, and of John, who leaned upon his breast at supper, and we think such companionship must have been very sweet, and so it was.

But the time will surely come when all those who have faithfully followed the Master here, will see him whom they have loved, and hear him pronounce the blessed words, “Well done.” Then the prayer of Jesus will be answered, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.” (John 17:24) Then they will see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.

To live, even in this sin-cursed earth, is the all-absorbing desire of mankind; but to live with Jesus in the new earth will be life indeed. To live with him then, we must be dead with him now. To be dead with him, we must be dead to sin. “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom 6:11)

The way we may be dead with Christ is fully set forth in the following verse: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Here we are not only told how we may be dead to the world, but a rule is given us, which, applying to ourselves, we may discover whether we are dead to sin and the world or not.

Does sin or Christ reign in our mortal body? Do the desires, appetites, follies, and passions of sin control us, or are all our powers in sweet submission to God’s will — Christ the hope of glory, enthroned within, reigning in and ruling over us?

Christ’s authority in the heart must be complete. The heart is not so great but that Jesus can occupy the whole, nor so good but it may be made infinitely better by his presence.

Those who want nothing so much as Christ, may have His presence, not as “one that turneth aside to tarry for a night,” but as a constant and abiding guest. To those in the Laodicean state of the church, who have not fully received him, he offers this gracious invitation: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev 3:20) Shall we “bring him in a welcome guest,” and fully allow his gentle sovereignty over us? If we do, sin will be removed; for Jesus and sin cannot dwell in the same heart. Sin and self must be dead in us to fit the heart for the Heavenly Guest.

This is the death which fits us to live and reign with Jesus when he comes. Upon one thus fully dead, Satan’s temptations have little effect. A dead man cannot be flattered and praised into pride, nor reproved and reprimanded into discouragement. So the true followers of Jesus, whose anchor has entered within the veil, are always enabled to say, “None of these things move me.” “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him” — live with him when sin is not only removed from our hearts, but from the whole world, yes, from the whole universe; when Satan and all his power shall be forever destroyed; when there will be nothing to hurt or destroy in all God’s holy mountain, and the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. “The life we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God,” but there hope will be changed to glad fruition, faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

“O, what are all my sufferings here,
If, Lord, thou count me meet
With that enraptured host to appear
And worship at thy feet!
Give joy or grief, give ease of pain,
Take life or friends away;
But let me find them all again
In that eventful day.”

THE GIFT of INDIVIDUALITY

“God is acquainted with every man. Could our eyes be opened we would see that eternal justice is at work in our world. A powerful influence, not under man’s control, is working. Man may fancy that he is directing matters, but there are higher than human influences at work. The servants of God know that He is working to counteract Satan’s plans. Those who know not God cannot comprehend His movements. There is at work a wheel within a wheel. Apparently the complication of machinery is so intricate that man can see only a complete entanglement. But the divine hand, as seen by the prophet Ezekiel, (Eze 1:15 – 28) is placed upon the wheels, and every part moves in complete harmony, each doing its specified work, yet with individual freedom of action.” [Manuscript 13, 1898, Ellen G. White]

And so it is with the church of God in the earth. No one man heads the work. As all the different members of the human system unite to form the entire body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole. “For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body... and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

And if they were all one member, where would the body be? ...there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.” (1Cor 12:12 – 14, 18, 19, 25 – 27) “Let us cease looking at the failings of others. Let us cease speaking of their evil traits of character. When the Lord told Peter what to do, he turned and asked, ‘Lord, what shall this man do?’ The Lord answered, ‘What is that to thee? Follow thou Me.’ ...It is our business to follow Christ and then we can counsel others. What we want is individual religion, personal piety.” [Review & Herald, April 16, 1889]

Religion is “*the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it.*” Liberty is “*the state of being exempt from the domination of others, or from restricting circumstances. In ethics and philosophy, the power in any rational agent to make his choices and decide his conduct for himself, spontaneously and voluntarily, in accordance with reasons or motives.*” Religious liberty, therefore, is man’s exemption from the domination of others, or from restricting circumstances: man’s freedom to make his choices and decide his conduct for himself, spontaneously and voluntarily: in his duty to his Creator, and in the manner of discharging that duty.

Since God has created man, in the nature of things the first of all relationships is that to God; and the first of all duties could be nothing but duty to God. Suppose a time when there was only one intelligent creature in the universe. He was created: and his relationship to his Creator, his duty to his Creator, is the only one that could possibly be. That is the first of all relationships that can possibly be. Therefore it is written that “the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one Lord: and Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”

All there is of any soul is first due to God; because it all came from God. This, therefore, is the first of all commandments, not because it is the first one that was ever given by spoken word, or that was ever written out; but because it is the first that could possibly be. And this because it is the expression of the first

principle of the existence of any intelligent creature. The principle was there, inherent in the existence of the first intelligent creature, in the first moment of his existence; and there the principle abides eternally, unmodified and unfading.

Now, though that is the first of all possible relationships, and the first of all duties; though that relationship and duty are inherent in the very existence of intelligent creatures; yet even in that inherent obligation, God has created every intelligent creature free — free to recognize that obligation or not, free to discharge that duty or not, just as he chooses. Accordingly it is written: “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

Thus it is absolutely true that in religion — in the duty which we owe to our Creator and the manner of discharging It — God has created man entirely “exempt from the domination of others and from restricting circumstances;” has made him free “to make his choice, and decide his conduct for himself, spontaneously and voluntarily.” Thus religious liberty is the gift of God, inherent in the gift of rational existence itself.

Any service as to God that is not freely chosen by him who renders it is not service to God. There can be no virtue in it; there can be none of God in it. Any service rendered as to God that is not freely chosen on the part of him who renders it cannot be of God; because “God is love:” and love and compulsion, love and force, love and oppression, never can go together. Therefore any duty, any obligation, anything, offered or rendered as to God that is not of the individual’s own freely chosen choice, can neither be of God nor to God.

Accordingly when the Lord created whatever creature — angel or man — in order that the creature should be happy in the service of God, and in order that there should be virtue in rendering service or worship to God, He created him free to choose to do so. And this is *individuality*, and the divine right of it. God created man free. When man by sin was separated and lost from that freedom, Christ came to restore him fully to it. The way of God and of Christ, therefore, is the way of liberty. And the work of God through Christ with mankind in the whole history of the world has been to make plain this way and to give to man the absolute assurance of this “soul liberty” which is the only true liberty. Whom the Son makes free is *free indeed*.

It is true, as the inspired record shows, that autocracy, as illustrated in King Nebuchadnezzar; (Dan 3) that government of the supremacy of law, as illustrated in the Medo-Persian power; (Dan 6) that the union of church and state, as illustrated in the Jewish church and the Roman power united against Christ; (John 19) that the church as such, as illustrated in the church of Israel against the disciples of Christ; (Book of Acts) has no right to assert authority or jurisdiction in religion. It is equally, and even more emphatically, true, that, to be at all loyal to God and the right, or true to themselves and to their fellow men, the three Hebrew young men, the man Daniel, the Lord Christ, and apostles of the Lord, must absolutely disregard every such assertion. In each case God’s dominion was usurped. In each case the right was being completely thrown over, and the wrong established in its place. In such a case and at such a time could any who knew God or cared for the right, sit still and do nothing? Is allegiance to God nothing? Shall the *wrong only* be recognized as having the right to prevail? Shall man never be true — neither true to God nor to the right, neither true to himself nor to his fellowmen?

The three Hebrew young men did right when they refused to recognize any right of autocracy in religion. Daniel did right when he refused to recognize any right of civil government of law in religion. The Lord Christ did right when He refused to recognize any right of the church through the civil power to make effective her will. The apostles and disciples of the Lord did right when they refused to recognize any right

of the church to decide or to dictate what they should or should not believe and teach. In each of these cases God openly and in mighty miraculous power made perfectly plain to all that these individuals were right.

By this it is openly demonstrated not only that they were right, but that they were divinely right. And in each case the story has been written out that all powers and people forever may know that such course is divinely right. And whosoever will stand with God as did each of these in his place, can know it. It is these individuals and such as these, who, in their day and from age to age, have kept alive in the world the honor of God, who have kept alive the right in the world, who have kept alive integrity and true manliness in mankind; yea, it is just these and such as these blessed individuals who have kept the world itself alive.

God has created all intelligences absolutely free. He made man, equally with other intelligences, to be moral. Freedom of choice is essential to morals. To have made an intelligence unable to choose would have been to make it incapable of freedom. Therefore, He made man, equally with other intelligences, *free to choose*; and He ever respects that of which He is the Author, the freedom of choice.

When, in the exercise of this freedom of choice, an intelligence chooses that his existence, with its consequent faculties and power, shall be spent strictly subject to the will and within the design of the Creator, and so, indeed, with the Creator and in the Creator, this is in the truest sense strictly and truly self-government. And when the service, the worship, and the allegiance, of each intelligence is to be rendered entirely upon his own free choice, this reveals on the part of God, the Supreme and true Governor, the principle of government with the consent of the governed. Thus the divine government as it relates to both the Governor and the governed, the Creator and the creature, is demonstrated as well as revealed to be government of perfect freedom; and of perfect freedom because of perfect *individuality*.

Through sin man lost his freedom and therefore his individuality. But in the gift of Christ all was restored. “He hath sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives.” “Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” Christ [Yahshua], therefore, came from Heaven unto the world to bring back to man, and to bring man back to, what man had lost. Individuality was the Creator’s supreme gift. In the fall, this was lost. In the gift of Christ the day man sinned, the gift of individuality was restored to man. In the long ages of sinful and imperial despotism from Cain to Tiberius Caesar, men had been so continually and systematically oppressed that they had been robbed of every vestige of individuality. Then Christ came into the world in human flesh as man, and through every phase of human experience established the individuality of man upon its own original and eternal basis. (Matthew 25:15)

Therefore, without Christianity in its original and native purity there cannot be true individuality. But in the interests of despotism the very name of Christianity was perverted. And through long ages of ecclesiastical imperialistic tyranny men were again systematically robbed of every vestige of individuality. In the Reformation, God again restored men to Christianity and individuality. But Protestantism hardened in forms and creeds; and every form and denomination of Protestants has denied, and done all that it could to destroy, Christian liberty and individuality. And now, through denominational, national, international, and world federation and confederation in religion and of religions, again ecclesiastical imperialistic despotism will work with all worldly power, deceiving signs, and lying wonders, systematically to rob man finally of every vestige of individuality. But Christianity in its supreme gift of individuality, as always before, will now and finally triumph over all. (Revelation 15:2, 3) (*Individuality*, bear in mind always; *not individualism*: for it is distinctly an “*ity*,” never “*ism*.”) [Adapted from *Individuality in Religion*, by A. T. Jones]

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

This event has been so much dwelt upon by God's people, ever since the days of Enoch, (see Jude 14 – 16) that the unbelieving world has come to regard it as a myth and a fable. They shut their eyes to the fact that no prophecy of Scripture has failed. Cities, nations, and families, have continued or ceased to be, just as the prophets indicated; and history proves that the prophets wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and shall not this prove also a matter of history by and by?

The apparent delay will prove to have been in mercy to a fallen world; it will be the grand opportunity for the wise to trim their lamps, and for the foolish to sleep. It gives value to probation, to know that it is nearly closed; and the wise thank God for every day of apparent delay, that it may be improved in work for God and his cause.

THE RELIGION of HUMAN NATURE (6–6–6)

There is great need that all who claim to be Bible Christians should take the Scriptures as they read. There is need of arriving at right conclusions as to what the Scriptures mean in their reference to “the man of sin,” “who thought to change times and laws.” He had no real power to change the times and laws of God, but he thought himself able to do this work; for he “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” He is an imitator of the first great rebel, the originator of sin.

In heaven Satan thought to change the laws of God, and for this purpose he changed his character and his position in the heavenly courts, and influenced others until they united with him in the work of rebellion against God; but he did not succeed in changing the laws of God. God did not alter or change his form of government to suit Satan’s ideas, but made it manifest that the foundation of his government in heaven and earth is as unchangeable as is the throne itself. When Satan could not induce all the angels to revolt against the law of God, he made the earth the scene of his rebellion, and through the man of sin seeks to carry out his diabolical purpose.

Through the Papacy, the Roman power, the man of sin, the purpose of Satan is carried out among men; the law and the appointed times of God are set aside. In this we see that professed Protestants give encouragement to popery; and false systems of worship, against which our fathers manfully opposed themselves, imperiling even property and life, are fostered and cherished and encouraged to extend and gain wide influence. Even Adventists do not search their Bibles as they should, and do not heed the warning that has been given concerning the work of the man of sin. The Roman Church claims that the pope is invested with supreme authority over all bishops and pastors, and this claim of supremacy was once denied by all Protestants. They took the position that the Bible, and the Bible *alone*, constituted the rule of faith and doctrine, that the Word of God is the only unerring guide for human souls, and that it is unnecessary and harmful to take the words of priests and prelates of the visible church instead of the Word of God.

To the Romanist the Bible is not the final authority, because it plainly reveals the errors of the Roman system; and whoever searches the Bible with an enlightened understanding, cannot long be in harmony with this false system. He who searches the Bible to understand the truth, will find no authority in the Word of God for the assumption of power on the part of popes and cardinals. There is no Word of God that sanctions their assumed superiority or supremacy over their people, as there is no Word to sanction the claim that Lucifer made in heaven of superiority over Christ. The claim of the Papacy to superiority is made under the influence of the first great usurper, who so persistently urged his right to supremacy over the host of God. Through the Dark Ages, that long night of ignorance and superstition — the claim of the Papacy to superiority and supremacy was conceded by emperors and kings, although God had sanctioned no such concession, and raised up men to dispute the claim, and to break the Romish yoke from the Church of God.

Through His appointed agencies God summoned the church to reassert her independence, and in the strength of God she stood forth in the liberty wherewith Christ had made her free. She broke away from the papal yoke, and with the Word of God in her hand, met the giant evil of Romanism, even as David met Goliath in the name of heaven, using his sling and a few pebble stones. The opponent of Israel was slain by the man of faith; and while men cling to the Word of the Lord, they cannot associate themselves with any Romish system of error.

The Lord has pronounced a curse upon those who take from or add to the Scriptures. The great I AM has decided what shall constitute the rule of faith and doctrine, and He has designed that the Bible shall be a household book. The church that holds to the Word of God is irreconcilably separated from Rome. Protestants were once thus apart from this great church of apostasy, but they have approached more nearly to her, and are finally on the point of reconciliation with the Church of Rome. Rome never changes. Her true principles have not altered in the least. She has not lessened the breach between herself and Protestants; they have done all the advancing. But what does that argue for the Protestant of this day? It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy. And even mainline Adventists have followed suit by bridging the gulf of division in the twentieth century.

Souls like Luther, Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, Huss, Jerome, and the thousands of noble men who were martyrs for the truth's sake, are the true Protestants. They stood as faithful sentinels of truth, declaring that Protestantism is incapable of union with Romanism, but must be as far separated from the principles of the Papacy as is the east from the west. Such advocates of truth could no more harmonize with "the man of sin" than could Christ and his apostles. In earlier ages the righteous felt that it was impossible to affiliate with Rome, and, though their antagonism to this system of error was maintained at risk of property and life, yet they had courage to maintain their separation, and manfully struggled for the truth. Bible truth was dearer to them than wealth, honor, or even life itself. They could not endure to see the truth buried under a mass of superstition and lying sophistry. They took the Word of God in their hands, and raised the standard of truth before the people, boldly declaring that which God had revealed unto them through diligent searching of the Bible. They died the cruelest of deaths for their fidelity to God, but by their blood they purchased for us liberties and privileges that many who claim to be Protestants are easily yielding up to the power of evil.

But shall we yield up these dearly bought privileges? Shall we offer insult to the God of heaven, and, after he has freed us from the Romish yoke, again place ourselves in bondage to this anti-Christian power? Shall we prove our degeneracy by signing away our religious liberty, our right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience?

The voice of Luther, that echoed through mountains and valleys, that shook Europe as with an earthquake, summoned forth an army of noble apostles of Jesus, and the truth they advocated could not be silenced by fagots, by tortures, by dungeons, by death; and still the voices of the noble army of martyrs are telling us that the Roman power is the predicted apostasy of the last days, the mystery of iniquity which Paul saw beginning to work even in his day. Roman Catholicism is rapidly gaining ground. Popery is on the increase, and those who have turned their ears away from hearing the truth are listening to her delusive fables and gloating over the "advances" of *Vatican II*. The Protestant world is asleep and has lost the mark of distinction that separated them from this carnal world. They have healed the wound between themselves and the Roman power.

Going deeper into darkness, they have been unwilling to accept light which God shed upon their pathway — turning away their ears from hearing the truth. They speak with contempt of the idea that there will be a revival of the past cruel persecution on the part of Romish minds and those who affiliate with them. They do not recognize the fact that the Word of God fully predicts such an event, and will not concede that the people of God in the last days shall suffer persecution, although the Bible says, "The dragon was [angry] with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev 12:17)

Popery is the religion of human nature, (666) and the mass of humanity loves a doctrine that permits them to commit sin, and yet frees them from its consequences. People must have some form of religion, and this religion, formed by human device, and yet claiming divine authority, suits the carnal mind. Men who think themselves wise and intelligent turn away in pride from the standard of righteousness, the Ten Commandments, and do not think it is in harmony with their dignity to inquire into the ways of God.

Therefore, they go into false ways, into forbidden paths, become self-sufficient, self-inflated, after the pattern of the pope, not after the pattern of Jesus Christ. They must have the form of religion that has the least requirement of spirituality and self-denial, and as unsanctified human wisdom will not lead them to loathe popery, they are naturally drawn toward its provisions, doctrines, and policies. They do not want to walk in the ways of the Lord. They are altogether too much enlightened to seek God prayerfully and humbly, with an intelligent knowledge of His Word. Not caring to know the ways of the Lord, their minds are all open to delusions, all ready to accept and believe a lie. They are willing to have the most unreasonable, most inconsistent falsehoods palmed off upon them as truth.

Satan's masterpiece of deception is popery; and while it has been demonstrated that a day of great intellectual darkness was favorable to Romanism, it will also be demonstrated that a day of great intellectual light is also favorable to its power; for the minds of men are concentrated on their own superiority, and do not like to retain God in their knowledge. Rome claims infallibility, and Protestants are following in the same line. Even the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has imbibed this error. They do not desire to search for truth and go on from light to a greater light. They wall themselves in with fear and prejudice, and seem willing to be deceived and to deceive others.

But though the attitude of the churches is discouraging, yet there is no need of being disheartened; for God has a people who will preserve their fidelity to His truth, who will make the Bible, and the Bible alone, their rule of faith and doctrine, who will elevate the standard, and hold aloft the banner on which is inscribed, "**The Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.**" They will value a pure gospel, and make the Bible the foundation of their faith and doctrine.

For such a time as this, when men are casting aside the law of the Lord of hosts, the prayer of David is applicable — "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." We are coming to a time when almost universal scorn will be heaped upon the law of God, and God's faithful people will be severely tried; but will they lose their respect for the law of *YAH* because others do not see and realize its binding claims? Let God's last church, like David, reverence God's law in proportion as men cast it aside and heap upon it disrespect and contempt. Beware of **THE RELIGION of HUMAN NATURE!** [Adapted from Ellen G. White]

TRUE FREEDOM

Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No; true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free.
They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak,
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think,
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.
— ANONYMOUS

PERSUASION vs. COMPULSION

God is love, and His law is a reflection of His mind, a transcript of His character, hence His law is a law of love. Its commandments all grow out of the principle of love; hence love fulfills the law. (Rom 13:10) The Savior who came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, (Matt 5:17) and to magnify it and make it honorable, (Isa 42:21) had the law within His heart, and delighted in it. (Psalm 40:8) This gives conclusive evidence that His service was a service of love. He Himself declares, “I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” (John 15:10)

Love leads to willing service and cheerful obedience, hence love is necessary to the fulfilling of the law. “This is the love of God that we keep His commandments.” (1 John 5:3) This is the only service that God will accept, because when any other principle than love, or any other motive than to please God, actuates us in religious exercises or religious observances, we are governed by a wrong principle, by a selfish motive, and therefore we worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, (Rom 1:25) and have another God before the Lord. (See Exo 20:2, 3)

Let us illustrate this point. When a person starts out in the service of God, or is baptized, or joins the Church, or performs any religious duty, or refrains from doing what the Scriptures forbid, to advantage himself, or to please a friend, or because of public opinion or a popular sentiment, he exalts the creature above the Creator. He seeks selfish interests and the honor of men, and not the honor that comes from God only. That was the condition of the Jewish people in the time of Christ, and He speaks of it as an insurmountable obstacle to their believing in Him! (John 5:44) “Without faith it is impossible to please Him,” (Heb 11:6) and “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Rom 14:23) So, an outward, formal religious observance that is not rendered in faith, to please God and honor Him, is rendered in unbelief, to please ourselves or our fellow men. This is surely exalting and honoring the creature above the Creator, while professing to honor and worship God, and this is not only hypocrisy, but idolatry; and since such service and worship are not prompted by faith in God and inspired by love for Him, they are sin against Him.

Religious observance rendered because of human influence or pressure cannot be acceptable to God, because it is not prompted by the love of God and the influence of His Spirit. Moreover, such service or worship is really given to that agency or power whose influence or pressure secured it, and not to God. When human power, whether exercised by the church or the state, leads us to the observance of the rites and ceremonies of religion, we render obedience to that power, and thus worship it, instead of rendering obedience to God and worshipping Him. Hence it becomes a matter of vital importance to us all that we examine ourselves to see whether we be in the faith, (2 Cor 13:5) the faith once delivered to the saints, (Jude 3) and have the faith of Jesus, (Rev 14:12) the which will enable us to seek the honor which comes from God only, and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters, or to see whether we shall yield to earthly powers, and thus worship them by obeying the laws they make supporting religious institutions.

From the principles already laid down, it must be evident that all worship or service must be voluntary and come from the heart to be acceptable to God, and that compulsory service is really but outward and formal, and, instead of being rendered to God, is given to the power which compels it.

Obedience in the realm of religion is the highest form of worship, for it is the test of allegiance and loyalty; hence those who seek by law to enforce any religious observance or institution are really enforcing a false worship instead of the worship of God. This would be true whether the observance was commanded in the

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

Scriptures or not; for if men outwardly observe a religious institution because it is enforced by civil law, their observance is not rendered to God, but to the power enforcing the law, and thus they give their allegiance and worship to an earthly authority instead of the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth. It is in this way that the beast and his image are worshiped. (Rev 13:11 – 15; 14:9)

All true Protestants know that the mystery of iniquity, which began to work in Paul's day and developed into the "man of sin," who sat in the temple of God and opposed and exalted himself above God, (2 Thess 2:3 – 7) was none other than the visible head of the apostate church of Rome, symbolized in the Revelation by "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots." By forsaking her husband, the LORD of heaven, and forming a connection with the state, an unholy wedlock, she made use of the civil power to enforce obedience to her will. This caused all those who submitted to her power to worship the beast, while those who refused to yield went down to martyrs' graves, and because of this, she is represented as drunken with their blood. (Rev 17:6)

In her history we see the logical result and the necessary fruit of compulsion in matters of religion, and, when placed in contrast with the life, character, and teachings of the Prince of Peace and His apostles, and the fruit of their unselfish labors in winning by love, beseeching, persuading, exhorting, and entreating the people to be reconciled to God, we have an object lesson which is very instructive to those who are willing to be taught of God.

When professed Seventh-day Adventists, or any other Protestant communion, forsake their LORD by uniting with the world and seeking the power of the state to enforce their will upon the people in religious things, will not the same shameful results follow as were seen when the Church of Rome pursued the same course? Will not like causes produce like effects? When any church organization adopts the same principles and the same policy, and uses the same means that Rome did to extend her religion and advance her cause, do they not themselves become Romanists in fact? And will not their work result as disastrously, and bring the same ruin in its train as the work of Rome?

When professed Seventh-day Adventists gain control of the civil power, as they did in 1981 by trademarking their church name, and seek to use that power in the interest of their religion, by suing violators of their trademark, they secure a union of Church and State, and make an image of the beast. (Rev 13:11 – 18) And by controlling the civil power through deceit and greed, and thus securing enforcement of laws, clothed in commercial garb, and yet applied to sustaining religious business policy; they compel obedience to their will. Hence they enforce the worship of the beast and the image of the beast which they have set up.

In this, professed Seventh-day Adventists who claim to be Protestants, by abandoning the principles of the Gospel of Peace, and losing the Spirit of the Prince of Peace, and substituting compulsion for persuasion, and force for love, are repeating the history of Rome, and they cannot escape her fate any more than the "harlot daughters" before her. They have become so drunken with the wine of Babylon, and have so largely partaken of the spirit of Antichrist, that they are deceived into believing that they are doing God's service when they compel obedience to their own will, and use the power of the state to enforce their own views. This is the papal principle — the policy of Rome. It is absolutely not Christian, but manifestly anti-Christian.

The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. (Rom 1:16) That power is the power of love in DRAWING, WINNING, PERSUADING, and it always leaves every man, however vile, the freedom of choice. "Whosoever will, let him come." (Rev 22:17) The world's Redeemer says, "Come unto Me." He

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

graciously invites all to come. He never asked, and would not accept, earthly power in carrying on His work, even when it was offered to Him. He clearly taught that His kingdom is not of this world, so His servants could not fight or use force to advance it, (John 18:36) and that those who take the sword (the emblem of human power: 666) shall perish by the sword. (Matt 26:52)

When the Church appeals to the State for power to enforce obedience to her will in religious matters, she turns away from the Gospel which is the power of God, she substitutes human for divine power, compulsion for persuasion, force for love, and law for Gospel.

Thus the ministers of the church become ministers of the law to spy out, convict, fine, and imprison, and visit the extreme penalties of the law upon the very ones which Christ came not to condemn but to save. Are they doing the work of the Savior while engaged in such work? God forbid! Would they not better exemplify the life and teachings of the humble Man of Calvary if they would be truly ministers of the Gospel, seeking by precept and example to lift the fallen, to aid the unfortunate, to minister to the sick and needy, to point sinners to the Lamb of God, and, like Jesus, go about doing good? Will the infidel, the skeptic, the heathen, the heretic, the dissenter, yes, and even the schismatic, be won to Christ by law, with its pains and penalties, or by the Gospel, with its gracious invitations, its tender ministrations, and its labors of love? The answer is obvious!

The golden rule forbids compulsion and teaches persuasion in matters of religion. Breathing the spirit of freedom, it will freely grant to others what it claims for itself. It rules out of the fold of Christ the lordly bishops, the ambitious ecclesiastics, the self-inflated churchmen, who seek to lord it over God's heritage by taking to themselves "divine authority," and claiming to be the representatives of God in executing the "divine will" upon those who, in their infallible (?) judgment are violating the "divine will" and bringing a reproach upon their "good name." These professed servants of Jesus Christ, in the work they are doing and the position they are taking, are exalting themselves above their LORD, and following the example of the bishops of Rome. Christ would not judge between two brothers who disagreed in their property matters, saying, "Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" (Luke 12:14) Now His professed servants are exalting themselves to judge between brethren — howbeit they disqualify the trademark violators from being their brethren.

Even in matters of faith and conscience, they proceed to use all the earthly power they can grasp to uphold their "working policy" and punish the violator of "divine will." Do they not show in this that they are not the servants of Christ? They exalt themselves above Him, and claim an authority and a power which He not only did not exercise, but which He expressly disclaimed, and thus it is seen that they partake of the spirit and nature of him who exalted himself above the stars of God, and declared that he would be like the Most High. (Isa 14:12 – 14)

The words of Elder W. W. Prescott are appropriate to note and remember:

"Carnal weapons cannot be used to any advantage in a spiritual warfare. When Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, Christ rebuked him and healed the wound. When a church in alliance with the State employs the secular power to enforce its doctrines by punishing heretics, it repudiates the essential idea of Christianity. Those who would command fire to come down from heaven and devour the oppressors, do not know what manner of spirit they are of." [*The Protestant Magazine*, November, 1915]

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

Let every lover of liberty, and every lover of true Christianity, labor by precept and example to inculcate the principle taught in the golden rule, namely, persuasion based on love, which wins the heart, instead of compulsion based on fear, which makes hypocrites and idolaters, or martyrs who choose to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

AMERICAN FOUNDERS ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

“Every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.”
— George Washington.

“When a Religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support, so that its Professors are obliged to call for the help of the Civil Power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.” — Benjamin Franklin.

THE PROVINCE of CIVIL GOVERNMENT

The proper object of civil government and the limit of its authority are not sufficiently understood by many at the present time. Because of this those who would abuse this ordinance of God and pervert it from its legitimate sphere of usefulness find their designs much easier of accomplishment than they otherwise would.

Civil government was ordained of God, and consequently for a good purpose. This being so, no true child of God can ever be an Anarchist, or resist the powers that be. But, although ordained of God, and for a good purpose, civil government was not ordained to make men religious, or for the punishment of those who are irreligious. Its sphere does not reach to the realm of religion.

When, and for what purpose, then, was civil government ordained? Mr. Young, in laying down the principles of government and law in his *Government Class Book*, p. 12, and thus showing the necessity for civil government, says: “Man is by nature selfish, and many would infringe the rights of others for their own selfish ends, unless restrained. Hence we see the necessity of some fixed rules, that each may know what he may do, and what he must not do.”

This in brief gives the whole ground and basis for the existence and necessity of civil governments. Their object is to protect men in their rights by restraining others from infringing upon them. They were designed to act as a check upon the carrying out of selfish ends, a curb on selfishness. They have been a recognized necessity in the nature of things, a necessity because as Mr. Young says, “man is by nature selfish,” and therefore needs something to prevent him from acting out this nature, so long as he is possessed of it.

But when did man become selfish? When did this trait, which is the taproot and mainspring of all the evil and misery the world has ever known, become a part of man’s nature? Certainly it was not at creation, for “God made man upright.” Man, therefore, as he came from the hand of the Creator, had no need of civil government. There was no need of civil government at creation. If, then, we can ascertain when selfishness entered the world, we can tell when civil government became a necessity. But this is not hard to determine. It was when man fell, when he yielded to temptation, when he became the servant of that being who is the embodiment of all selfishness, by choosing to follow his directions for personal improvement, in utter disregard of the express command and prohibition of God. This was when man by nature became selfish. And only subsequent to this time could there be any occasion or necessity for civil government.

Following this line of thought a little farther, it must also be apparent that the necessity for civil governments can exist only so long as man remains in a fallen condition, so long as he is possessed of a selfish nature. There will be no such governments in the redeemed state. The necessity for it will then have passed away.

Still further, it is evident that those who have been converted, whose affections have been changed, who have in them the mind of Christ, who came to this world not to please himself, have no need of civil government even in this world, in order to keep themselves within the bounds of civility. They do not refrain from stealing, lying, and killing because the government threatens vengeance upon those who do such things, but because it is not in their hearts thus to do. So far as they are concerned, men’s lives and property would be as safe without civil governments as with them. Those for whom these governments were ordained as a restraining power, seek to escape from punishment usually when they commit these

offenses; but with Paul the Christian will say, “If I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die.” (Acts 25:11)

The Christian recognizes and regards the rights of others because he is converted, because he loves his neighbor as himself. In his actions he is governed by the higher law of love, and not by the penal code of the State. On the other hand, the fear of punishment is the chief incentive by which the State influences those who recognize no higher power, to respect the rights of their fellow men. “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? [...] For if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” (Rom 13:3, 4) God has entrusted this sword with the State, not the Church.

Let it not be forgotten, then, that the proper object of civil government is the restraint which, through the fear of the punishment it threatens and executes, it places upon those who would otherwise disregard the rights of others in carrying out their own selfish ends. It can deal only with the fruits of selfishness. With the heart, the seat of selfishness, it has nothing to do. To transform this by such means is an utter impossibility. A change of heart is a work requiring creative power. It can be done only through the influence which religion brings to bear upon the soul, by the gospel, which is “the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.”

The province of civil government and that of religion are therefore widely separated. Those, therefore, who seek to accomplish through the former that which can be attained only through the latter, show their ignorance both of true religion and of the proper sphere and object of civil government. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, seeking and using the power of the State in their religious work, instead of the power of God. Civil government is of this world. “My kingdom,” says Christ, “is not of this world.” And of his followers he says, “Ye are not of the world.” (John 18:36; 15:19)

The weapons of the State are carnal. “He beareth not the sword in vain.” But, speaking for the Church, Paul says, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” (2 Cor 10:3, 4)

Those, therefore, who appeal to the State to enforce their ideas of religion cannot be Christians, however high their profession of Christianity may be. There can be no more certain evidence that a church which in the past has enjoyed the blessing and power of God, is fallen and has lost its connections with God and its hold upon Him, than for it to seek the support of the secular power in its work. To all such the message, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen,” applies. And when this condition of things becomes general, the true and sincere children of God cannot long remain in their communion. They will hear and heed the call, “Come out of her, my people.” And, although the laws of the land may have been brought to the support of certain religious rites and customs, and are urged upon them on the ground that they should be in subjection to the powers that be, they will refuse obedience to whatever conflicts with the word and law of God, knowing that *The Province of Civil Government* extends not to things religious. With the apostles they will say, “We ought to obey God rather than men,” and with the Reformers, “We pledge, therefore, our obedience to the emperor in all civil matters; but as for the Word of God, it is liberty that we demand.”

TRUST IN GOD

God has given us the power of self-government, which is the freedom and ability to make decisions. We are unable to change our hearts, but we *can choose* to trust and obey God, and He promises to work in us to give us the desire and power to live in harmony with Him. By *choosing* to trust and obey God, a total change will be made in our lives. We then will receive His power and strength, and we will live a life of victory!

THE HOUR OF GOD'S JUDGMENT

The judgment will come; but he who preaches the Gospel in truth must say, "The hour of God's judgment is come." (Rev 14:7) In other words, the books are now open, and all cases, both of the dead and of the living, are to be decided for eternity before Christ can close His work in the heavenly sanctuary, and return to the earth to bring the promised deliverance and reward to His servants.

The Savior has kindly sent us this message, not that we should be left to wonder when the judgment will begin with the living, or when our case will appear, *but that we may "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb 4:16)

God is not an arbitrary ruler or judge, but in all His dealings with man he invites man to cooperate with God in His work, as it is written, "Surely the LORD God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto his servants the prophets." And thus in the matter of the judgment, the LORD has sent a message to His people, in order that they may know of the work that is being done, and that they may come and present their cases before the throne, and have them decided at once for eternity.

The first angel's message (Rev 14:6, 7) is not given for the dead, but that the living may recognize their great privilege to come and present their cases for judgment after having made preparation.

There are but three steps necessary to prepare us to come before the judgment seat with perfect confidence, and with the assurance that the verdict will be satisfactory.

Firstly, acknowledge the claims of God's law. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." (James 2:12)

Secondly, recognize our own unrighteousness. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isa 64:6)

Thirdly, accept of the perfect righteousness of Christ. "And this is His name whereby He shall be called, ***YAH is OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.***" (Jer 23:6; See also Psalm 68:4, KJV)

After having taken these steps by faith, we are ready to pray the prayer, "Save me, O God, by Thy name, and judge me by Thy strength." (Psalm 54:1) And the verdict will come back at once, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1) Advancing daily in the Divine Life you are secure.

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom 8:33, 34) When we have received this message by faith we can go on our way

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

rejoicing, with our “faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration,” for we shall realize that we have “passed from death unto life.” (1 John 3:14) “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2:10)

The Father is waiting for us to receive His precious truth in all its fullness, which will be followed immediately by the out-pouring of the latter rain, ripening our fruit for the earth’s final harvest. Won’t you receive His saving judgment today and be prepared for the soon coming of our blessed Master?

“The Word of the living God is not merely written, but spoken. The Bible is God’s voice speaking to us, just as surely as though we could hear it with our ears. If we realize this, with what awe would we open God’s Word, and with what earnestness would we search its precepts! The reading and contemplation of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the Infinite One.” [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 6, p. 393*]

THE ABOMINATION of DESOLATION

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place... Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains...” (Matthew 24:15, 16)

“...they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily... and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.” (Dan 11:31)

“And from the time that the daily...shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” (Daniel 12:11)

Bible students have focused on the above texts for centuries. Numerous commentaries have been published, and in each succeeding generation, there seems to have been more light shed to elaborate the full meaning of *The Abomination of Desolation*. Without endeavoring to consult the “authorities,” we seek only reliance on the Holy Spirit’s inspiration for bringing forth a fresh unfolding of this subject.

In writing to the church in Thessalonica, Paul called their attention to the manner in which self-exaltation and love of power was to be developed in the apostasy of the Church. Speaking of Christ’s second coming, and events to precede it, He said: “That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” (2 Thess 2:3, 4) We see how the outgrowth of self-exaltation was to result in great apostasy in the Church during “the dark ages,” constituting the Papacy, a union of Church and State which inflicted persecution upon devout Christians.

The exaltation of self in the individual dethrones God from the heart, bringing the man directly under the dominion of self, sin, and Satan. As predicted in this Scripture, the toleration by the Church of the self-exaltation of the leaders in the Church, resulted in placing in the temple of God (the Church) a head (pope) who declared himself as God upon earth to rule the LORD’s people.

To avoid being taken in this snare of Satan, the people were admonished to cleave to “*the truth*,” to “*the Word*.” Of those who would be involved in this great apostasy, the apostle said, “They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved... Who believed not *the truth*... God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” As to what truth is here meant we read: “Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether *by word, or our epistle*.” (2 Thess 2:10, 12, 13, 15)

As this “falling away” is traced through the pages of history, there is seen in its growth a departure from the direct teachings of the Word of God. Instead of cleaving to the Bible as their only standard of faith, and expressing that faith in Scripture language, there came into their teaching a mystical principle of interpretation. Instead of following the advice of Paul, “Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things,” they were telling what the Bible meant, their interpretations being often contrary to what the Scriptures in other portions taught. Those who adhered directly to “the Word of truth,” saw in this “mystery-work” a development of just what the apostle had predicted. As they proclaimed against this innovation, there arose a direct conflict between those who taught plainly stated Bible truths, and those who adhered to creeds formulated by men. The teachers of the creed, being “high-minded” and self-confident, soon lost the molding influence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. And so the people who

followed the creed-makers were rapidly corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel. This resulted in their condition being “empty, and desolate, and waste.” Nahum 2:10)

In the setting up of this “abomination that maketh desolate,” (Dan. 12:11) we see that five distinct steps were taken:

1. Forming a creed. Expressing their faith in man-made phrases instead of adhering to the Word as it came from God. In placing man-made interpretations on the Word, they deviated from the truth of the Word.
2. Making that man-made creed a test of fellowship, and denouncing all as heretics who would not assent to the exact wording of their creeds.
3. Making the creed a rule by which all heretics must be tried. Many were thus declared sinners, whose faith was more in harmony with the direct statement of the Bible than that of those who decreed against them.
4. Constituting themselves a tribunal for the trial of heretics, and excluding from their fellowship all who would not consent to their creed. Not content to debar such from church privileges in this world, they declared them subjects for the lake of fire.
5. Having thus kindled a hatred in their own hearts against all who did not conform to their creed, they next invoked and obtained the aid of the civil arm to torture, and kill with sword, with hunger, with flame, and with the beasts of the earth, those whom they had declared unfit to remain in this world.

Then appeared on the stage of action one class of “professed Christians” with a head over them, actually declaring that he was “God on earth,” persecuting another class of Christians who were conscientiously following the LORD and His Word — a class of whom it might be said, in the light in which God views them (as was said of the ancient worthies), “Of whom the world was not worthy.” (Heb 11:38) This apostasy we recognize to have been the Roman Catholic Church, i.e. the Papacy. Those affected by the self-exalted “head” could have identified with David’s prayer, (Psalm 143:2 – 4) “...enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.” The above condition is descriptive of *The Abomination of Desolation* “set up” in an individual’s heart.

During the period of Protestant Reformation the Almighty secured an arsenal of dedicated individuals ordained to diminish the desolation of souls. However, the doctrine that God has committed to the church the right to control the conscience, and to define and punish heresy, is one of the most deeply rooted of papal errors. While the Reformers rejected the creed of Rome, they were not entirely free from her spirit of intolerance. Thus when some of them united with the State, they fell, and God had to use other people, called out of Babylon to carry forward His work.

So, the Reformation would continue: “Thus saith the Lord GOD: In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities [in the anti-typical Day of Atonement]. I will also cause you to dwell in the cities (well-established, unified families), and the wastes shall be builded (character perfected). And the desolate land shall be tilled (hearts purified), whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by (Babylon). And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden (full of vibrant life); and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced [with the standard of God’s law], and are inhabited (not divided or scattered). Then the heathen (worldly churches and unchurched population) that are left

round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that [which] was desolate (the sign of sanctification and redemption, the Sabbath of *YAH*, restored during the “loud cry”): I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it (the power of creation demonstrated by the living testimony).” (Eze 36:33 – 36) This is a wonderful description of God’s promise to revive His last-days Church to primitive godliness — of how the One who sanctifies will *do* it [by His Word]. (Brackets supplied)

In this concluding generation, *YAH* has been leading a Reformation which must continue unto the end. This movement is to overcome, in our “enlightened age,” the last appearance of Antichrist — diffusing the glory of the LORD throughout the whole earth. (Rev 18:1) But God’s remnant people will not journey into Heavenly Canaan without fierce warfare — being subjected to severe trial and testing. One final danger must be recognized — *The Abomination of Desolation* in its sophisticated array of “religio-commercial” deception. This “abomination” is the epitome of Romish hypocrisy, being “set up” by “the false prophet” of Revelation. (Rev 13:11 – 18; 16:13; 19:20; 20:10)

He is the third and final agency, in the evolution of a “three-fold union” of powers, designed by Satan to wage war against the saints of the Most High, (Rev 12:17) attempting desolation through the strong arm of civil government. This professed representative of God cleverly maligns the Sabbath-keeping people of God in a manner not yet seen in all of earth’s history. Jesus says, “...then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matt 24:21) Having had great light and holding to the highest profession of any “Christian society” through the last generation, this, “once pure” but now corrupt, confederacy erects *The Abomination of Desolation* as a standard in God’s temple, making void the “commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

Claiming to be the Elijah people (the true prophet), they prove themselves to be the counterfeit Elijah (the false prophet), employing “common fire” “from heaven” intended to desolate “the very elect,” enjoining them from “legal trade” in the closing Gospel message. (Rev 13:13, 17) Rather than seeking God’s “sacred fire” of love to consume their *own* deficiencies, (*cf.* Heb 12:29; 1 John 3:8) they cause the fires of persecution to be kindled upon the saints who have faithfully submitted to purging in “the furnace of affliction,” (Isa 48:10) that they might perfectly reflect the character of Christ and proclaim His gospel to a world perishing in the dregs of iniquity.

“When ye... shall see *The Abomination of Desolation*... stand in the holy place (Christ’s visible Church), then let them which be in [church membership] flee into the [safe places of worship].” (Matt 24:15, 16; brackets supplied)

“When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When the warning sign should be seen, those who would escape must make no delay... They must not hesitate a moment, lest they be involved in the general destruction... Not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Christ had given His disciples warning, and all who believed His words watched for the promised sign (*The Abomination of Desolation*). ‘When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,’ said Jesus, ‘then know that the desolation thereof is nigh... Then... let them which are in the midst of it depart out.’ (Luke 21: 20, 21)” [*The Great Controversy*, pp.26, 30]

“As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy [of Romanism in the Church] be a sign to us that the limit of God’s forbearance is reached.” [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 451*]

The faithful few, “after long and severe conflict,” see that “to dissolve all union with the apostate church” is “an absolute necessity if they would obey the Word of God. They [dare] not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls, and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children...” [*The Great Controversy*, p. 45]

The angel cries, “Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come...” (Rev 14:7) “Come out of her (Babylon fallen), my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins (abominations), and that ye receive not of her plagues (desolations). For her sins have reached unto heaven (“the limit of God’s forbearance,” see Gen 11:4 – 9) and God hath remembered her iniquities (abominations).” (Rev 18:4, 5)

You have only one safe course — “depart out” of the wicked city! Otherwise the frightful words will be heard, “...I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matt 7:23) “And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the LORD shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.” (Jer 51:29)

DEATH TO SELF

You must be willing to turn from your own carnal mind to experience the death to self, taught by the Apostle Paul. One must sincerely *choose* as an eternal choice — day by day, moment by moment, day and night — the mind of Jesus *only*.

THE WINE of BABYLON

The evils which have grown out of the union of church and state in the third and fourth centuries will never be fully realized until the Day of Judgment. There is something in the nature of such a union which seems to make it desirable to many, even to professed Christians. Yet it is controlled by a spirit which is deceptive in its nature, active in its working; and whose end is evil and only evil.

That union of church and state was what formed the Papacy — a persecuting power — seen by the prophet John, and with which the kings of the earth had committed fornication, and by the wine of the wrath of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth had been made drunk. (Rev 17:2) This corrupt church is described as representing great wealth. “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.” (Rev 17:4)

Her iniquity is thus described in the fifth and sixth verses: “And upon her head was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”

In forming this union with the State, the Church entered upon a road which could lead only to destruction; for when the nations of the earth are represented as giving their power to the beast, their end is forcibly portrayed in the following words. “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” At the conclusion of the battle of the great day, the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, which were gathered together to make war with Him that sat upon the horse, are described as being cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. (Rev 19:20) Consequently the forming of this union was the *final fall* which thrust them upon that downward road which prepared, for final destruction, all who, whether professing Christianity or not, had partaken of the spirit of persecution. It was one of those sins which are generative in their nature, and in the end, place the soul beyond the reach of hope.

How important it is that we not only have correct views ourselves as to what are the proper claims of God upon us, and what are those of Caesar, but that we may correctly present them to others. It is not infrequently that when we have spoken of the evils of a union of church and state, as applied to Sunday legislation, men of intelligence have remarked to us that it could not be possible in our day that any such bill would pass Congress; and yet in the 1880's it was shown that those very kind of men signed the petition for the National Sunday Law (Blair Sunday Rest Bill of 1888), not realizing anything of its true nature. It is true that in our secular society a National Sunday Law, abridging the free exercise of religion, appears to be unlikely. However, “Congress is only too eager to interfere with religion. In February 1981, 280 delegates representing almost all the organized religions in the country met in Washington to complain that the government was interfering in church activities far more than ever in the nation's history.” [*God Cares, Vol. 2, pp. 347 – 48*]

The Federal courts are making decisions that set the stage for state-protected religion. There are thousands, and even millions, of people around us who only need to be enlightened as to the nature of this work, to be aroused to oppose it. The true spirit of Protestantism must be renewed.

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

To worship God by civil power or through civil power, is like praying by machinery — only many times worse. The early Reformers brought with them, from the Roman Catholic Church, much of its spirit in this respect; and it was only for want of an opportunity that they did not practice it more than they did. John Calvin ever believed in it. Melancthon, an intimate friend of Luther and Calvin, endorsed the doctrine and recommended it. John Knox, who was associated with Calvin for years, instilled the same spirit into the Scottish Reformers. In a work written by Calvin refuting the supposed errors of Servetus, among the many questions discussed, is “whether it is lawful for Christians or magistrates to punish heretics.”

The affirmative is maintained by Calvin, and subscribed to by fourteen other ministers. It was Calvin, in his letter written February 1546, who acknowledged *himself* to have recommended the condemnation of Servetus. He says that Servetus had written him a letter, including in it a large list of his extravagant ideas and hectoring views, proposing that “I should see extraordinary and un-heard-of things, if I were willing that he should come hither. But I was unwilling to give my promise; for if he had come, I should have used my authority in such a manner as not to suffer him to depart alive.” Calvin wrote to the king of England recommending that heresy to the faith they had espoused should be restrained by the arm of the civil power. [See *Life of John Calvin*, by Theodore Beza]

The Protestant Reformers of England, even some of those who suffered martyrdom, advised inhibiting heretics by civil power. The children of the Reformers, who came to the United States for freedom of conscience, brought with them the same spirit — and the whole world became intoxicated with this wine of Babylon. Modern society is thoroughly deceived as to the effect of this “wine” upon the people; and when the persecution came upon the Branch Davidian Seventh-day Adventists in Waco, Texas, it was *not* called religious persecution, any more than it was in the days of papal rule. It was *only* the law of the land; therefore, only a “police regulation.”

The Washington Post, May 28, 1995 reports, “Two years later, it [the Waco siege] still haunts prominent participants, such as Dick DeGuerin, one of Texas’s leading defense attorneys and one of only two people allowed inside to speak with Koresh during the siege, and Catholic priest Jim Deaconson, who ministered to the ATF agents, heard their confessions, and now believes the entire episode amounted ‘to *the persecution of a church.*’” In the heathen islands which have been Christianized, the idea also prevails among religionists that they must have Christianity established by law.

It is thus that the peaceful reign of Christ is looked for throughout the world, and thus that the gospel is to be established in heathen countries. If the Christians of the United States of America favor legalizing “Christianity,” then it is not surprising that their missionaries should partake of the same spirit. Is it not marvelous that a nation like ours, the only one on earth founded on laws leaving religion where Christ placed it (separate from the civil government) — a nation which has had an unparalleled prosperity, should ever think it safe to follow in the footprints of the Papacy, whose bloody trail, drenched by the blood of Christian martyrs, is so easily traced down the march of the ages? Is it not far more strange that when a few God-fearing men and women have entered a heathen country, and many of them have sealed their testimony with their blood to gain the victory of the cross — that the only way to retain the victory gained at such a price, is by a union of church and state, depriving the people — the descendants of these pioneers — of their liberty of conscience, and compelling them by law to worship God, and become Christians? Did Christ design that the heart should be softened by civil law, in order that His Spirit might enter and dwell therein?

Experience has taught us, in every instance, that when men take this work in hand, it is necessary to employ the thumb-screw, rack, and many other instruments of torture, in order to extort confessions; while for the

crime of differing in conscientious belief and practice, the stake, and death in numerous ways, was the punishment thereof.

There is power in the Gospel to attain all victories over idolatry and superstition. Then why do men throw off the power which enabled them to achieve the victory, and rely for their future success upon the strength of the finite civil arm? It seems that when those who have suffered and died for the promulgation of Christianity, have passed from the stage of action, their children, who take their places, attempt to throw the “garb of piety” around themselves by employing the civil arm of power.

It is the “*wine of fornication*” (Rev 14:8; 18:3) that leads to fornication *itself*. The word “fornication” means unlawful intercourse between the sexes. The Church became corrupted through apostasy and imbibing various unscriptural errors. This resulted in her *confused* state called “mystical Babylon.” And then Babylon, though she denied the name, was still espoused to Christ, and God had not forsaken her. In fact, He desired to heal and restore her wholly. She belonged to Him, and professed to do so. But when she turned from His remedy, choosing rather the errors of the world, she fell. When God in mercy sends His truth, in the eyes of her followers and of the world, Babylon must either give up her errors and accept the truth, or attempt to justify the errors she holds. Contemporary churches have, for the most part, chosen the latter course.

Now and then honest souls have, compelled by conviction of duty, sacrificed all and heeded the Shepherd’s voice. But the church organizations have not done this. Their representatives have sought to defend their position, in what they consider a test, based on perversions of Scripture. Falling into this, they have relied on tradition, creeds, and worldly policy. Lying tradition and human wisdom having failed, they have turned and are turning more and more to the nations of the earth and imploring them to use civil power to enforce their unscriptural institution(s). In other words, they have turned from the power of the Gospel of Christ to civil law; from Christ, the lawful husband, and have committed fornication with the rulers of the earth.

Breaking her union with Christ in her wantonness leads to unlawful union with the world. Rejecting Christ within the heart by faith — “the mystery of godliness” — means enthroning in His place “the mystery of iniquity.” Rejecting the Gospel, His armor of righteousness and the Word of persuasion leads to the acceptance of the law of man, the carnal weapons, and the word of compulsion and tyranny.

The whole world is drunken with *the wine of Babylon*. The only hope and answer for this confused state is the instruction of the mighty angel of Revelation, chapter 18: “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; (Gospel power, Rom 1:16) and the earth was lightened with His glory. And He cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations (peoples) have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, (church and state union) and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev 18:1 – 4)

How is it in your religious establishment? Are you confused? Has your church joined with the world? Are you tired of being deceived and led astray? Have you all but given up on Christianity? Then come to the Good Shepherd. He will guide you safely home to His sheep-fold and the mind-state of sober understanding. The gates of hell will not prevail against Him or His Church.

THE PARABLE

There were two women: One went to her servant and said, “Make for me A DAY which all will respect and call holy.”

The other woman summoned her servant and said, “Make for me A NAME that none will defame, and all will regard blessed.”

The first woman’s servant returned saying, “I have made a HOLY DAY for you; it will be respected and enforced by civil pledge.”

The second woman’s servant returned saying, “I have made a BLESSED NAME for you, and the governor has pledged to protect it from defamation and unauthorized use forever.”

Who are the two women?

How do we know the two women agree?

THE TRUE PROTESTANT

Protestant: (Definition) — “A Christian of a church other than the Roman Catholic Church or the Eastern Church.” **Protestant:** “One who protests.” [*Webster’s New American Dictionary*, 1939]

Protestant: “Originally, any of the German princes and free cities that formally protested to the Diet of Spires (1529) its decision to uphold the edict of the Diet of Worms against the Reformation.” [*Webster’s New World Dictionary, College Edition*, 1962]

It is very interesting and somewhat disappointing how meanings of words tend to lose their impact and true meaning over time. I am reminded of the example once shared with me of a new white shirt. When new, the shirt is obviously “snow white.” As time passes, and several washes intervene, the shirt still appears to bear the same white color. However, the day a brand new white shirt is brought home to hang in the closet, a comparison is made. What a disappointment to see how “yellowed” the old shirt has become with use. Thus it is with *Protestantism* — once protesting, now conceding.

Read of the spirit of *the true Protestant*:

“The principles contained in this celebrated Protest [of Spires]... constitute the very essence of Protestantism. Now this Protest opposes two abuses of man in matters of faith: the *first* is the intrusion of the civil magistrate, and the *second* the arbitrary authority of the church. Instead of these abuses, Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate, and the authority of the word of God above the visible church. In the first place, it rejects the civil power in divine things, and says with the prophets and apostles, “We must obey God rather than man.” In presence of the crown of Charles the Fifth, it uplifts the crown of Jesus Christ. But it goes farther: it lays down the principle that all human teaching should be subordinate to the oracles of God.’ ...The protesters had moreover affirmed their right to utter freely their convictions of truth. They would not only believe and obey, but teach what the word of God presents, and they denied the right of priest or magistrate to interfere. The Protest of Spires was a solemn witness against religious intolerance, and an assertion of the right of all men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.” [*The Great Controversy*, p. 181]

In time past Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Wesley, Waldo, Roger Williams, Calvin, Tyndale, Zwingli, Knox, Latimer, Melancthon, and unnamed others, all by divine faith, stood on the holy ground of True Protestants. And yet, these men, for the most part were Sunday-keepers, believing either Sunday was the seventh day of the week, or that the solemnity of Sabbath had been transferred to the first day of the week, [both tenets being in error]. By testimony of the Roman Catholic Church we read:

“For ages all Christian nations looked to the Catholic Church, and, as we have seen, the various states enforced by law her ordinances as to worship and cessation of Labor on Sunday. Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the church, has no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought logically, to keep Saturday as the Sabbath. The State, in passing laws for the due Sanctification of Sunday, is unwittingly acknowledging the authority of the Catholic Church, and carrying out more or less faithfully its prescriptions. The Sunday, as a day of the week set apart for the obligatory public worship of Almighty God, to be sanctified by a suspension of all servile labor, trade, and worldly avocations and by exercises of devotion, is purely a creation of the Catholic Church.” [*The American Catholic Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1883, pp. 152, 139; cited in *Bible Readings for the Home*, p. 425]

“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ Himself, hidden under veil of flesh.” [*The Catholic National*, July, 1895]

“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] church.” [Monsignor Louis Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, 1868, p. 213; *ibid*, p. 430]

The official newspaper of the Cleveland Diocese says:

“By what authority did the Church change the observance of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday?”

“The Church changed the observance of the Sabbath to Sunday by right of the divine, infallible authority given to her by her Founder, Jesus Christ. The Protestant, claiming the Bible to be the only guide of faith, has no warrant for observing Sunday. In this matter the Seventh Day Adventist is the only consistent Protestant...” [*The Catholic Universe Bulletin*, Aug. 14, 1942, p. 4; *ibid*, p. 430]

“...the Seventh Day Adventist is *the only consistent Protestant...*” was a statement to be proud of in 1942. But what happened to the Seventh-day Adventist Church? In 1942, they were standing on the holy ground of *THE TRUE PROTESTANT*.

Our discussion requires some regression at this point to gather some historical background and relevant principles.

Antichrist was recognized by Luther as the pope. “...at last I know that the pope is Antichrist, and that his throne is that of Satan himself.” [Quoted in *The Great Controversy*, p.126] Wycliffe understood the office of the pope to be Antichrist. “...Wycliffe called upon the people to consider whether these two [rival popes] were not speaking the truth in condemning each other as the Antichrist.” [*ibid*, p. 79] This position has been the norm for conservative Protestants since the Reformation. In *Bible Readings for the Home*, published (1963) by Review and Herald Publishing Association, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists holds the same posture as the Reformers in the chapter entitled “The Kingdom and Work of Antichrist,” pp. 204 – 210. But in 1976, the General Conference President, Neal C. Wilson is quoted in *Conflict*, p. 6, as saying, “Although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint, ...that attitude on the church’s part was nothing more than a manifestation of wide-spread anti-popery among conservative Protestant denominations in the early part of this century, and the latter part of the last, which has now been *consigned to the historical trash heap* as far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned.” (Emphasis supplied.) So we can clearly see a significant decline [or fall] in the Protestant position once held by the General Conference Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Summarizing what has been discussed so far from *THE TRUE PROTESTANT* viewpoint, we note that the Roman Catholic Church is the Antichrist kingdom, with the pope sitting on the throne as “the man of sin.” Further, we discover that the Roman Church authorities of 1942 regarded “the Seventh Day Adventist [as] the *only consistent Protestant.*” By 1976 the Seventh-day Adventist Church is making obvious “concessions to Rome.”

“While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, let us arouse to comprehend the situation and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice

and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.” [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 716*]

To see where we are in prophetic history, we need to look at how God worked with His people in the channel of truth.

“When the early church departed from God and imbibed pagan errors, she became Babylon. When she united with the state, she fell, and, as an organization, was the body of Christ no longer. While the Reformation churches held fast to the word Christ was with them. When they crystallized their various errors into creeds and endeavored thus to confine God’s word, they made themselves daughters of Babylon. When some of them united with the state, they fell, and God had to use other people, called out of Babylon to carry forward His work. Now (1896) among these very churches which came out of the second Babylon, confusion reigns; and now (1896) great Babylon, including later daughters, is in adulterous union with the kings of earth, and is endeavoring to make that union stronger. God calls no church Babylon which holds to His word, and follows the light that shines from it...” [*International Sabbath School Quarterly, First Quarter, 1896*]

This means that in 1896 the Seventh-day Adventist Church was the only church called of God to carry His gospel. All of the others were “in adulterous union with the kings of earth”. As early as 1846, Ellen Harmon [White] saw, “...that the third angel proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message, and raise the voice of warning to the world to keep the commandments of God and His law as the apple of the eye...” [*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 96*]
What other people did God call to give the warning of Revelation 14:9 – 12 which reads as follows?

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” (Rev 14:9 – 12)

Who is giving this warning today? It is not the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. They had “consigned [it] to the historical trash heap” as early as 1976. The various “offshoot” Sabbath-keeping bodies are heralding a wide variety of messages, but none include the “third angel’s message in verity.” *THE TRUE PROTESTANT* is to preach the warning message of Revelation 14 as prescribed. Since the General Conference Seventh-day Adventist Church has failed in her mission, what is her spiritual state? When she “departed from God and imbibed pagan errors, she became Babylon (1903).”

“I saw our Instructor (Jesus) pointing to the garments of so called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He said to me: ‘Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? How is the faithful city become an harlot! My Father’s house is made a house of merchandise, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed!’” [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p. 250, 1903*]

“When she united with the state, she fell, and, as an organization, was the body of Christ no longer.” This condition was fulfilled in trademarking the name Seventh-day Adventist in 1981 (church-state union), the persecution of dissenters (1988 – 1991) in the United States, and refusal to corporately repent. This conforming to the mind of Rome by the General Conference “marked” her as an “image to the beast.” At that point, present truth dictated a reclassification of churches. “The image” is spiritually part of “the beast” [or Roman Catholic system]. Therefore “the image” *cannot be* a Protestant church. The Protestant churches must be bodies *protesting* the corruptions of “the image.” *THE TRUE PROTESTANT* is protesting the sins and errors of “the beast and his image.”

“The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, (trademark lawsuits) the inroads of spiritualism, (homosexual church membership, church-sponsored abortions, mind-control techniques, etc.) the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power — all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred... In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven (1888 Message through Bros. Jones and Waggoner; *1888 Re-Examined* by Bros. Wieland and Short, 1950; the Brinsmead movement, 1955 – 62; Fourth Angel’s Movement, 1965 – 1988; Life Supports Ministry, 1980 – 88). [*The Great Controversy*, p. 532; brackets supplied]

Summarizing our conclusions, we note that the Roman Church has been fallen for many centuries; the Sunday-keeping daughters (apostate Protestantism) have been fallen for many decades; (since at least 1896) the initial channel of truth for Sabbath reform, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is “Babylon fallen;” (the image of the beast) and the various Sabbath-keeping bodies classified as “offshoots” of the Advent movement are in confusion and error — none of which are heralding the messages of Revelation 14 [being designed to seal the 144,000]. Where are the true Protestant churches? *THE TRUE PROTESTANT* is preaching the gospel of “Christ in you the hope of glory,” calling the faithful souls out of the fallen churches, and resisting the designs of “the beast and his image.”

There is One Leader in this work. God has called *The Creation 7th Day Adventist Church* to the front for “the final conflict.” Other dispersed Protestants are in the field, just as there were 7000 which had “not bowed unto Baal.” (1 Kings 19:18) There are home churches in various places — “little companies standing in the light.” The sheep have been scattered by the false shepherds, but the Good Shepherd is now gathering His flock “from one end of heaven to the other.” Soon the controversy will be ended, but one last battle is facing us. Will you not join in the call of the third angel and lift up the voice of warning? “The banner of truth and religious liberty which the Reformers held aloft has in this last conflict been committed to us.” [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 6*, p. 402] “Blessed be the name of *YAH*,” (Psalm 113:2), and “the man that doeth this.” (Isa 56:2)

THE TRUE PROTESTANT “shall not fail nor be discouraged,” (Isaiah 42:4) even at the peril of his own soul. Amen!

OUR CHURCH CREED

The prayer of Christ in John, chapter 17, “that they all may be one” as the Father and the Son are one, is our *only* Church Creed.

THE QUESTION

Unless there is guilt, there would be no necessity in calling for repentance. When therefore, judgment is executed because repentance has not followed the act of transgression which brought the guilt, how does God relate to the corporate identity involved? Does He separate the individuals who are not directly involved from the leaders who have led the people into sin? In other words, to ask it plainly, will the laity and the rank and file of the ministry be spared the judgments of God upon the hierarchy, who have led in the apostasy from the truth of God? In seeking an answer to this question, we shall study the dealings of God with His people in past ages.

In the days of ancient Israel, on their way to the land of promise from Mount Sinai, rebellion broke out. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram challenged the leadership of Moses. In turn, Moses called for the leaders, and those associated with them, to appear before the sanctuary that God might reveal His will. Dathan and Abiram refused to come. The Lord then ordered all of the congregation of Israel to separate from the tents of these men. Because Dathan and Abiram would not appear at the tabernacle, Moses went to their tents, followed by the elders of Israel. Observe what followed:

Moses spoke to the congregation saying: Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs lest ye be consumed in all their sins. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. (Numbers 16:26, 27)
[Note: The little children had not joined in the refusal which their elders had sent to Moses; see Numbers 16:12 – 14]

Here were two families (corporate identities) standing together. Two men had sinned (the heads of the households). Here were ties of loyalty, (kinship) and there was the command which had been uttered but a little while before from Mt. Sinai, “Honor thy father and thy mother.” Would *corporate identification* take precedence over *individual responsibility*, or would the latter prevail? How would the decision of the sons of these men (Dathan and Abiram) affect their “little children?” Would God separate them from the judgment upon their fathers who had sinned? The record continues:

And Moses said... If the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up...

They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them. (Numbers 16:28 – 33)

While the families of Dathan and Abiram fell together under the judgment from God, because they refused to separate themselves from their corporate identity, the record also notes that the sons of Korah did not die. (Numbers 26:10 – 11) They did not appear with their father and the two hundred and fifty princes who had assembled at the door of the sanctuary to challenge the leadership of Moses and Aaron. The sons of Korah chose to exercise their individual responsibility, and refused to be identified in the corporate entity which initiated the rebellion, and thus they escaped the judgment of God.

On the Day of Pentecost, at the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus, there were assembled in Jerusalem for the feast, Jews, “devout men, out of every nation under heaven.” (Acts 2:5) These were not wicked men, but the “devout,” who had come to Jerusalem from the *diaspora* to celebrate the feast in harmony with the instruction God had given. A few, perhaps, had come for the Passover, and remained the fifty days till Pentecost, but *most were not even present when Jesus was crucified*. Quickly coming together due to the excitement and witness engendered by the coming of the Holy Spirit, they listened intently as Peter explained the meaning of what had recently happened and was now taking place. They heard him say:

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know... ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. (Acts 2:22 – 23)

Those who had not been present at the feast of the Passover were not moved. They had no part in the crucifixion of Jesus; they were not anywhere near. Those who might have come for both feasts knew that *the Romans* had done the act. It was *their hands* that were “wicked,” not their own. So they continued to listen, convinced they had no accountable guilt. Then Peter returns to them again, and brings it home. Note:

Let all the house of Israel (the whole body of Israel) know assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Acts 2:36)

Strong conviction took hold of them. Whether present or not, whether a part of the mob which shouted, “Crucify Him!” or not, (and definitely not a Roman soldier) still they were being *charged by God as guilty* of the blood of Jesus Christ, and accountable as participants in the crucifixion because of their corporate identity. Pricked in their hearts, they cried out to Peter and the rest of the disciples, *THE QUESTION*: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37) Their response to Peter’s counsel would determine whether they would be included in the general judgment of God upon the nation of Israel.

There are those among the professed people of God who would have us believe that the God with whom we have to do today is not the same God as yesterday. They vainly hope that the God who declared, “My Spirit shall not always strive with men,” (Gen 6:2) no longer holds to His word, but will grant unlimited time to an insubordinate people for them to repent of their apostasy. The laity are told that God is too merciful to visit His people in judgment. “Look at all the great and wonderful institutions which God has permitted to be built as monuments to His glory. Will He forsake such a people, and such an organization?” they are asked.

The dialogue continues, “God is different today; times have changed. He may have called into account the Jewish people who ‘cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and they were always to be exalted as the church of God.’ [Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 294] But this will not be true of the corporate body (Christ’s professed church) in our day. It is going through.” To the ones thus reasoning, the God of judgment has died.

But the God of Scripture is the same One who spoke in Old Testament times, and who through the Holy Spirit gave the same message on the Day of Pentecost. Read Ezekiel’s prophecy carefully where the Lord commissions His messengers, the men with the slaughtering weapons in their hands:

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. (Eze 9:5, 6)

“Here we see the church, the Lord’s sanctuary, was the *first* to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light, and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had *betrayed their trust*... ‘Times have changed,’ [they surmise]. These words strengthen their unbelief, and they say, ‘The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil. He is too merciful to visit His people in judgment.’ Thus peace and safety is the cry from men who will *never again* lift up their voices like a trumpet to show God’s people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins. These dumb dogs, that would not bark, are the ones who feel the just vengeance of an offended God. Men, maidens, and little children, all perish together.” [Testimonies for the Church, p. 211]

Tremble for yourselves, and weep for the others. Why this general destruction by a loving Heavenly Father? Because they are identified collectively in the guilt of their leaders, and have refused to exercise their individual responsibility in repentance. The God who held the sons, the son’s wives, and their little children guilty with Dathan and Abiram (Numbers 16); the God who held the “devout men” of Israel equally guilty with the “wicked hands” who crucified the Lord of glory, (Acts 2) is the same God who will visit in judgment, not only the leadership who have “betrayed their trust,” but also the laity (the men and women with their families) who by their corporate identity have supported that leadership by going along with the apostasy. These have upheld the leaders’ hands with their means and the Lord’s treasury.

Is it not time for an awakened church membership, pricked by the Holy Spirit as were the devout men of Israel on the day of Pentecost, to cry out with, *THE QUESTION*: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

When “devout men” of the House of Israel, convicted of the reality that God *does* hold individuals accountable for the actions of leaders and officers in their denomination, and realizing they had shared in the crucifixion of the Son of God, they cried out from an anguished heart: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” In response to this heart cry, Peter outlined certain steps to be taken by which they could escape the judgment of God. He said, “Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of [Yahshua, the] Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)

Peter closed his sermon with the admonition, “Save yourselves from this [crooked] generation.” (Acts 2:40) This directive from the voice of God, if studied in the setting of the time when given, can profit a professed people of God who *now* face the fast-approaching hour when “the church, the Lord’s sanctuary” will be “the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God” because the leadership, “those to whom God had given great light, and who stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their trust.” [Testimonies for the Church, p. 211]

While these “devout men” had not taken part in the deliberations, nor voted the death of Jesus, they had in reality *consented* to the crime committed by continuing in the forms and ceremonies of that church, and by quietly and passively following in the direction of the leadership. Why? “The Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. They were the children of Abraham, they declared, and so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights.” [Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 294]

And “the foundation” upon which they built their hope was none other than “the word of God” to Jeremiah. (See Jer 31:35 – 37) How could this word fail? Here was a promise of “eternal favor”; the House of Israel was going through! All they had to do was to stay with “the House.” But they overlooked the “conditions” upon which the promise was made. “To a people in whose hearts His law is written, the favor of God is assured. They are one with Him.” [*Desire of Ages*, p. 106]

But here was a people whose leaders had made of none effect the commandments of God by their tradition, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. (See Matt 15:6 – 9) And those devout Jews assembled together on the Day of Pentecost were following those leaders, right or wrong. Peter told these men of Israel to “repent,” change your mind, come to your senses, cease to be deluded by a false sense of security.

The admonition of Peter carried the same theme as was sounded by John the Baptist as he prepared the way for the ministry of Christ. John told his hearers, “Bring forth therefore fruits answerable to an amendment of life and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our fathers.” (Matt 3:8, margin)

In other words, get this theory out of your mind that you are, and always will be, the favorites of heaven, for God is able of “stones” to raise up “children unto Abraham.” (Luke 3:8) Peter preached with even greater conviction than John, because he had heard Jesus Himself declare, “Your house (no longer God’s house) is left unto you desolate.” (Matt 23:38) The temple veil had been rent, and the apartment of the Unseen Presence could be gazed upon by human eyes with no fear of retribution because that Presence was no longer there. (Matt 27:51)

Besides changing their way of thinking, the “devout Jews” were to make an outward confession which would publicly declare their change of thought. Each one who changed his mind was to be “baptized... in the name of [*Yahshua*, the] Christ.” Among those assembled to hear Peter were “proselytes.” (Acts 2:10)

These had been baptized as a symbol of their acceptance into Judaism so as to be numbered among “the House of Israel.” Now they are told by the Holy Ghost (through Peter) to be baptized *again*, and the other “devout Jews” who would also change their thinking, would by this act (of baptism) change their identity from the Church of Israel to the body of Christ.² Only thus could they find remission for the sin of the ages, the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, which was in reality the crucifixion of the Truth, doing the desire of their father the devil, who abode not in the truth. (See John 8:44)

Peter concluded his advice and counsel by telling those convicted to “save themselves from this crooked generation.” (Acts 2:40) In so advising, Peter was bringing together a concept from the Pentateuch, and a charge that both Jesus and John the Baptist had used in confrontation with the Jewish hierarchy. Moses had written that God was “the Rock” upon which Israel was founded, “a God of truth.” But Israel had “corrupted themselves” and had become “a perverse and crooked generation.” (Deut 32:4, 5) John the Baptist, seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees among his listeners, spoke directly to them by using a symbol of crookedness and saying, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” (Matt 3:7) Jesus was even more emphatic. Addressing the scribes of the Law and the Pharisees, He declared, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matt 23:33)

Thus Peter, knowing through the Holy Spirit, the curse which was upon the hierarchy, warned those, who wished not to be judged in the collective guilt of the nation, to save themselves from that “crooked generation.”

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

Those who responded to the command of Peter were baptized, signifying the passing “from death unto life” (1 John 3:14) and “continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship.” (Acts 2:41, 42) Through Christ, the Truth, and by the coming of the Spirit of Truth, the original faith was restored to men. (See Mal 4:5; Matt 17:11)

No more must men follow traditions and perverted concepts of the scribes and Pharisees. The truth as given by the Rock of Israel became the basis of the Church of Christ.

In the final hour of human history, when the power of the enemy to deceive the world appears to be supreme, “It seem[s] the whole world [is] on board; [and] that there could not be one left...” The messenger to the Remnant is advised (in vision) to “look in an opposite direction” and there views “a little company traveling a narrow pathway. All [seem] to be firmly united, *bound together by the truth*, in bundles, or companies. Said the angel, ‘The third angel (Rev 14:6 – 12) is binding, or sealing them in bundles for the heavenly garner.’” [*Early Writings*, p. 88 – 89]

Thus, *you* have “come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.” (Heb 12:22; Rev 3:12) The ***Remnant Church of Creation 7th Day Adventists*** realizes that the Jerusalem “which now is... is in bondage with their children;” therefore, they transfer their allegiance and loyalty to the “Jerusalem which is above” which “is free, which is the mother of us all.” (Gal 4:25, 26) In this we find the answer to *THE QUESTION*: “What shall we do?” [Adapted from “Corporate Accountability” by W. Grotheer]

THE CREATION 7th DAY

YAH, our Maker, has taught His children to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” (Exo 20:8) Since the origin of *The Creation 7th Day* some 6,000 years ago, (Gen 2:1 – 3) it has served as God’s “sign” or “seal” between Himself and His faithful worshippers. (Eze 20:12, 20) The Creator has manifested “no shadow of turning” in dealing with His “crown of creation.” He has remained “the same yesterday, today, and [will continue] forever.” (Heb 13:8) Hence, “the law of God is perfect, converting the soul.” (Psalm 19:7)

Human nature, without cooperation with the Divine, has been diseased with inconsistency and a disposition to change the perfect will of God. The Papacy made the law of God void by “thinking to change times and laws.” This resulted in the Pagan feast days of Roman Christianity: Sunday, Christmas, Easter, Halloween, and others, along with the adoration of images. This work of man attempted to conceal and effectively destroy God’s loving plan for His priceless creation. Progressively, men have lost their intimate communion with the Master Planner, and even the Bible Sabbath has been deceptively camouflaged by “Saturday idolatry.” By this, we identify a dead “form without the power,” through which “Saturday Protestants” have answered Rome’s image worship.

What does it profit a man if he goes to church every Saturday, and has no love? What does this man accomplish for his Savior and fellow-men? Christ was a servant; His disciples, likewise, are bondservants of righteousness. Saturday has absolutely no sanctifying power without the Spirit of Christ — even though it represents the Sabbath, being the seventh day.

The Creation 7th Day was made at creation for the first human family. It is important to remember that this preceded “the fall” of Adam. The earth was then a “wonder world” of perfect bliss and harmony — Heaven on earth. Picture, if you will, the relationship that the first couple and their Maker shared together there in the magnificent Garden of Eden. Can you imagine the innocence of that abundant life, free from pain, disease, stress, death, and all the hardships of this present sinful state? Eternal life was there bestowed upon the human pair.

The Creation 7th Day (Sabbath) not only commemorates the power and beauty of God’s Creation; it also stands as a perpetual memorial that man’s own “works” will never advance him or bring him any merit whatsoever in the estimation of God. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the [free] gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph 2:8, 9) Let it be forever understood that the Sabbath reminds us weekly, and every time we “remember” it, that salvation is “the [free] gift of God: not of works.” As such, *The Creation 7th Day* is the sign of God’s redemptive power, proclaiming Him as lawful Master of the repentant sinner.

Those who *refuse* to enter the Creator’s Rest fail to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” This class keeps a *day* unto themselves and becomes labeled “legalistic.” These must do something of their *own* devising or their *own* choosing, in order to please God — to *create* “a rest” in the soul. They must *mold* some sort of “idol” which masks their false impression of the true character of God. This is not authentic rest! These individuals fight for their rights, become offended easily, show anger quickly, complain about the circumstances of their lives, and manifest other ill spirits. Yet, these same “Christians” continue their high profession — deceiving themselves, and saying, “We are the chosen of God.”

Any who observe and keep a “counterfeit sabbath” find themselves without “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding...” (Phil 4:7) They often seek to improve or protect God’s program with some “image beast” of their *own* development. *Yahshua* says, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.” (Matt 23:15)

To illustrate our discussion, we may share a summary of the recent crisis in Adventism. *The Orlando Business Journal*, Vol. 12, Iss: 2, June 16, 1995 reported the following:

In Washington, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is fighting a landmark legal challenge filed by Prophecy Countdown members. The case could strip the 133-year old Seventh-day Adventist Church of exclusive trademark rights to its name.

The petition to cancel the SDA trademark was originally filed on October 6, 1988. After more than seven years, the TTAB decision was reported by the Adventist News Network as follows (March 8, 1996):

Seventh-day Adventist Church Wins Trademark Ruling

Silver Spring, Maryland, USA... [ANN]

The Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) of the Patent and Trademark Office found the trademark and service mark “Seventh-day Adventist,” used by the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 130 years in its worldwide Christian ministry, to be validly and federally registered.

In the majority opinion (p.3), dated February 15, 1996, the two petitions to cancel are summarized by the judges:

As grounds for cancellation both petitioners allege that they are Seventh-day Adventists and members of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination... and with being forced to become participants in obtaining an illegal trademark and unwilling participants in fraud because they give tithes and gifts which help support such fraud; that this causes them frustration and mental anguish, and will continue to cause such harm as long as respondent [Seventh-day Adventist Church] is allowed to hold and enforce the registered trademark... that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to express one’s sincere faith and belief in a religion, using the descriptive name of the religion to identify oneself as a part of it; that the subject registration violates petitioners’ First Amendment rights because unless petitioner’s congregation is approved by respondent, it may not use the name “Seventh-day Adventist” to express its members’ faith and belief; that the grant to respondent of the exclusive right to use the generic name “Seventh-day Adventist” constitutes an establishment of religion; that should petitioners practice their faith under the name “Seventh-day Adventist” without the express approval of respondent they would be subject to possible legal prosecution, and this would be religious persecution... that respondent has violated basic principles of Christian conduct as set forth in the Bible... *Stocker v. Gen. Conf. Corp. of SDA* (TTAB, 1996)

“...all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” (Matt 26:52) And “...he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” (Rev 13:10)

Liberty of Conscience – A Gift Worth Preserving

The saints do not take up the sword. They experience the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. In every life circumstance they have learned to be content and rest in the Providence of a faithful Heavenly Father.

While we can sympathize with the petitioners' view in the trademark case to a point, the Christian has no grounds to take up the sword of the State. While we *protest* the unholy union of Church and State, and the inevitable persecutions stemming from it, we find no permission in Holy Writ to "...go to law before the [unrighteous]." (1 Cor 6:1)

Any *initiation* of lawsuits in worldly courts by professed believers constitutes transgression of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. In this crisis, the record indicates guilt on both the part of the petitioner *and* the respondent. The Creator instructs us to —

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work... For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:8 – 11)

The Sabbath of the LORD is *The Creation 7th Day*, the representation of total *trust in* and *reliance on* the precious promises of God.

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God..." (Rev 7:2) "...and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." (Rev 7:4) *YAH* says, "...I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign [or seal] between Me and them, that they might know that I am *YAH* that sanctify them." (Eze 20:12) "Thus saith *YAH*, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for My salvation is near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." (Isa 56:1, 2)

THE CONCLUSION

The keeping of *The Creation 7th Day* forbids all recognition of the State in religious matters, and prohibits Christians, and *especially* Seventh-day Adventist Christians, from bringing suit in civil court.

The world can only be warned by seeing those who believe the truth sanctified through the truth, acting upon high and holy principles showing in a high elevated sense the line of demarcation between them who keep the commandments of God and those who trample them under their feet. The sanctification of the Spirit signalizes the difference between those who have the seal of God and those who keep a spurious rest day (and receive the mark of the name of the beast — Rev 14:11) [*SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 7*, p. 980; see also *ibid*, p. 822 on Rev 13:17; brackets and emphasis supplied]

Let it be remembered, it is the boast of Rome that she never changes. The foundations established by Gregory VII and Innocent III are still the basic tenets of the Roman Catholic Church and all other organizations built on Romish principles. And had these the power, they would put them into practice with as much vigor now as in past centuries. Professed Protestants, including Seventh-day Adventists, little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of religious liberty legislation and in amending morals of society. While they are bent upon accomplishing *their* purposes, Rome is aiming to secure *her* power, to recover her lost supremacy. As the principle has *now* been established (*Stocker v. General Conference Corp. of SDA*, TTAB, 1996) in the United States, that a church (the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists) may employ or control the power of the state; that “religious observances” may be enforced by secular trademark laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience, the triumph of Rome in this country is now assured. While we have already seen the initial exercise of church-state authority through the persecution of Pastor John Marik (Hawaii Trademark Case) in 1988, this Sabbath desecration is yet to be manifested in an open and obvious manner to the American public and the world.

God’s word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the professed Protestant world, including Adventists, will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this has been given her to a large degree. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is, even though it is exercised through the hierarchy of a *professed* Protestant denomination. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution. [Adapted from *The Great Controversy*, p. 581]

While the professed Protestants and Adventists are by their common attitudes making concessions to Rome, let us arouse to comprehend the situation and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voices and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed. [Adapted from *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5*, p. 716]

“If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are [now] guilty, it is *doing nothing* in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.” [*Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, p. 281*]

In this late and dark hour of earth’s history, God calls you to invest your means: time, money, talents, and soul energies into the most important work of Revival and Reformation ever witnessed since the foundation of the world. We enlist your pledge to “the loud cry” for God’s gift: *Liberty of Conscience*.

THE END



**THE CREATION SEVENTH DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH***

www.faihofjesus.to/index2.html

IP: <http://93.88.247.151/>

National Toll-free number: 1 888 284 2487 OR 1 800 754 8021

csdachurch@gmail.com

***The Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church**

is in no way affiliated with the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland or the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists in Washington, D. C.