

**Greetings to our Friends at**  
**CONNECTICUT VALLEY**  
**Seventh-day Adventist Church**  
**in the Name of JESUS the Wonderful CHRIST**  
**February 22, 2003**

**“MY LOVE FOR JESUS & HIS LAW”**

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**IS IT TRUE?**

- That the Seventh-day Adventist Church has abandoned the law of God or set it aside on a shelf, and operate the Church by a set of rules?
- Rules that might be interpreted as, “Come and let us *argue this out together*—in a combative spirit?”
- Trusting in political might and force of influence and argument.
- This happens to all of us whether we are liberal or conservative Adventists
- GUILTY? Yes, but JESUS came to save us *from our sin*—not to condemn us

**IT IS A GOOD THING**

- To discard legalism—in which we trust our own strength to be righteous, and
- To adopt God’s righteousness-by-faith in Jesus Christ via a living connected relationship with Him.

**LIVING ON THE PROMISES = PARTAKING OF HIS DIVINE NATURE**

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which *have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*” (2 Peter 1:2-4 NKJV)

## **OUR ONLY HOPE—PARTAKING OF DIVINE NATURE**

“...and the only way in which man may be an overcomer is through becoming a partaker of the divine nature.”(Sons & Daughters of God, p. 24)

## **BELIEVE IN CHRIST = PARTAKING OF HIS DIVINE NATURE**

“He who truly believes in Christ is made partaker of the divine nature, and has power that he can appropriate under every temptation. He will not fall under temptation or be left to defeat. In time of trial he will claim the promises, and by these escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. . . .” (My Life Today, page 274)

## **THE BIBLE ADVISES & INFORMS US:**

“Come, sit down and let’s *reason* together....” “Look at my Servant whom I chose. The One I love is the very One I sent you. I will put my Spirit in Him and He will share the good news of salvation with everyone. He will not *argue [quarrel—NKJV] or complain*. He will not become emotional and shout in the streets. He will not deal harshly with people, especially those who have even a flicker of interest. He will cause justice to triumph. People everywhere will trust in His name.” (Isaiah 1:18a; Matthew 12:18-21 TCW—The Clear Word)

## **JESUS INSTRUCTS US on OUR SPIRIT**

“Jesus called a mother with a small child over to Him. Tenderly He took the little one in His arms and said, ‘Unless you become as *innocent, trusting and harmless* as this little child, you cannot even be admitted into God’s kingdom,.... Such innocence comes to adults only by choice.’” (Matthew 18:2-4 TCW)

## **JESUS SUMMARIZED GOD’S LAW: LOVE**

“Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses? Jesus replied, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and *greatest* commandment. A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the other commandments and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.’” “...You can do anything for Him when you trust Him.” (Matthew 22:36-40 NLT; 17:20b TCW)

- **THE LESSON FOR ME** from the dialogue between the deaconess and God about loving others, is that my Number One Objective in life is to **LOVE JESUS** with my whole being, constantly inviting HIM to live in me—renouncing self in all situations where self wants to gain the supremacy—casting my helpless soul on JESUS.

## Jesus Said to Love...

- **“Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.” (Matthew 5:44 NKJV)**
- **“Turn your other cheek....” (Matthew 5:39)  
Is a FAMILY Member INCLUDED in this Command?**
- **"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me." (Matthew 25:40 NASU)**
- **How does all of this apply to members of our HOME & CHURCH? (Children and Grandchildren? Others—Fellow Believers—the Wheat & the Tares?)**

## GOD is Light & Love

***“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” (1 John 1:5-7 NKJV)***

**“To walk in the light is to keep moving onward in the direction of light.”  
“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for *God is love.*” “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment [punishment]. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us.”  
(Selected Messages, volume 1, page 131; 1 John 4:7-8 NKJV; 1 John 4:18-19 NKJV)**

## Love & Hate in our midst?

**“If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.” (1 John 4:20-21 NKJV)  
“And when the children of God manifest mercy, kindness, and love toward all men, they also are witnessing to the character of the statutes of heaven. They are bearing testimony to the fact that “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Ps. 19:7. *And whoever fails to manifest this love is breaking the law which he professes to revere.*”  
(The Desire of Ages, page 505)**

- **THE HATEFUL SPIRIT we might have Toward Others IS Our ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD.**

“For the spirit we manifest toward our brethren declares what is our spirit toward God. The love of God in the heart is the only spring of love toward our neighbor.”

“...the Holy Spirit does not abide in the heart of him who is peevish if others do not agree with his ideas and plans.”

(The Desire of Ages, page 505; Counsels on Stewardship, page 115)

Therefore,...

it follows that we might allow our low esteem for *only one other person* to block the love of God from flowing through us to help all others or any other person that God wants and needs to use us to help.

## **GOD’S PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH**

“...through the church will eventually be made manifest ... the final and full display of the love of God.” (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 9)

## **TEST? DO I KNOW JESUS?**

How I react to daily trials & traumas reveals how well I know Jesus.

**Nahum 1:7 NKJV**

“The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And *He knows those who trust in Him.*”

## **NOTICE THIS PRECIOUS INSIGHT**

**Christ’s Object Lessons, page 146, 159-160**

“Speak and act in harmony with your prayers. It will make an infinite difference with you whether trial shall prove your faith to be genuine, or show that your prayers are only a form.” {COL 146.2}

“No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul. {COL 159.3} It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed.”

## **TRUSTING JESUS**

- We can TRUST JESUS only if we KNOW JESUS, and

- We can LOVE JESUS only if we TRUST JESUS, and
  - We can LOVE OTHERS only if we LOVE JESUS with the whole heart, mind & will, and
  - We can KNOW JESUS only if we spend time getting acquainted with HIM and staying with HIM
  - How and why do we get to know Jesus?
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- IN 1974, WE JOINED THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
- WE LEARNED FROM OUR PASTOR—ELDER MORRIS VENDEN, HIS FORMULA FOR A DEVOTIONAL LIFE WITH JESUS.
- Gwen's question of how to do the devotional life he talked about.

I had known one or two people who talked of the Lord's answers to their prayers...

...How the Lord had provided specific things for their life and ministry, and  
The Lord told them to do thus and so...

...As if the LORD Himself was involved in their lives as a real person,

...as a truly personal God, Father, Savior and Friend to them—full of Power & Good Will.

I discovered that it was easy for me to love religion, to love fellowship, to love Church, to love the community of believers—to feel loved and wanted and needed there, attached to the Body of Christ...

But to know and trust and love Jesus was absent in my life until my mid-30s.

**Pastor Venden's CLUE # 1 for KNOWING Jesus:**

If you want to get to know Jesus, study about Him—that means reading Matthew, Mark, Luke & John plus The Desire of Ages, Mount of Blessing, Christ's Object Lessons, Steps to Christ—all by Ellen White & CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS by A. G. Daniels

**Pastor Venden's CLUE # 2 for KNOWING JESUS:**

After your study, enter into a time of prayer—read it back to the Lord, going over what you studied in conversation with the Him—asking how it needs to be applied in your life now and cast all your cares on Him.

### **BIGGEST CLUE OF ALL FOR KNOWING JESUS:**

After you have finished your prayer of praise & petition, then remain silently knelt to listen to God’s voice speaking back to you. Be patient—the Lord may have to lead your mind around through areas you don’t understand to get you to where you need to be—but wait until He finishes communicating back to you.

- I became very excited—like on the edge of my chair—upon hearing that it is possible to have a RELATIONSHIP of closeness to Jesus.
- But the question was—WHEN?
- The counsels of Scripture were very helpful in motivating me to want to do it:
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### **TRANSFORMATION**

“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV)

### **IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING JESUS**

“And this is eternal life, that they may *know You*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3 NKJV)

### **NO LIFE IN ME? FEEDING ON JESUS?**

“Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, *you have no life in you*. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so *he who feeds on Me will live because of Me*.” (John 6:53-57 NKJV)

### **ENDURING MERCY OF GOD—EARLY AM**

“Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. *They are new every morning*; Great is Your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:22-23 NKJV)

## **Daily**

“Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, *let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*” (Luke 9:23 NKJV)

## **Wake-up promise that I have often claimed**

“The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away.” (back under the covers—my application) (Isaiah 50:4-5 NKJV)

## **Results?**

“31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31 NKJV)

## **HOW MUCH TIME?**

*“It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.”* (Desire of Ages, page 83)

## **THE CLOSING SCENES—NOTICE THIS HELP**

“Looking upon the crucified Redeemer, we more fully comprehend the magnitude and meaning of the sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven. The plan of salvation is glorified before us, and the thought of Calvary awakens living and sacred emotions in our hearts. Praise to God and the Lamb will be in our hearts and on our lips; for *pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the soul that keeps fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary.* “He who beholds the Saviour's matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character. He will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love.”

“It is only the divine light that will reveal the littleness, the incompetence, of human ability, and give clear views of the perfection and purity of Christ. *It is only as we behold Jesus that we desire to be like Him, only as we view His righteousness that we hunger and thirst to possess it; and it is only as we ask in earnest prayer, that God will grant us our heart's desire.*” (The Desire of Ages, p. 661) (Gospel Workers, p. 255)

## **DAILY RENEWAL OF CONSECRATION TO GOD**

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, “Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.” This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.” (Steps to Christ, page 70)

### **The LORD helped me figure out that...**

I can only **LOVE JESUS** if I trust Him.

I can only **TRUST JESUS** if I know Him.

I can only **KNOW JESUS** if I spend time with Him, seeking Him with the whole heart—an honest spirit that is open to the Lord’s rebuke & correction, and His gifts of repentance and faith.

## **OUR MISSION**

The passion of God is focused on the Mission of Jesus Christ to Seek and to Save the lost people right around you and me.

“...so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to *those who eagerly await Him*. (Hebrews 9:28 NASU)

**THERE IS GREAT EXCITEMENT AT THE CONFERENCE OFFICE NOW BECAUSE OF ALL THAT YOU AND GOD ARE DOING AND SUPPORTING IN FULFILLING CHRIST’S MISSION TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THE LOST:**

- God is at work here in SNEC like few other places on earth—God raised up 35 new Seventh-day Adventist congregations and groups in 5 years.
- To go from 10,000 members to 11,000, it took 8 years; now we have seen the Lord take us to 12,000 in 2 years. PRAISE HIS NAME ALONE!
- 2003—we hope to see 200 meetings in SNEC during October 2003—hoping you are planning now for next October to participate in some way. Partnering with SNEC is Global Mission, ASI North American Division

**BEHOLD THE SUN SPOTS until the**

**SON-Spots are super-imposed on everything I think about and look at during all of the day.**

▪ **John 1:29-30 NKJV**

"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

▪ **Behold JESUS in HIS**

>Majesty & Meekness

>Purity & Relevance

>Power & Tenderness

>Strength & Patience

▪ **To remove from my life, my**

>Self-assertiveness

>Ambition for honor

>Impetuousness

>Resentful, ambitious temper

>Injured feelings when offended.

▪ **To Receive into my life, HIS**

>Humility of spirit and attitude

>Molding power of Christ

>Christlike character

>New nature in Christ. (See S/C 73)

▪ **Mount of Blessing, page 40, 129**

"Apart from Christ we are...*like the moon when her face is turned away from the sun; ...but when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness*, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence."

**Matthew 28:3 NKJV**

"His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

**2 Corinthians 4:6 NASU**

"For God, who said, '*Light shall shine out of darkness,*' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

**Last Day Events, page 286**

"I saw the exceeding loveliness and glory of Jesus. His countenance was brighter than the sun at noonday."

**Christ's Object Lessons, page 139**

"Christ was continually receiving from the Father that He might communicate to us....Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. **DAILY HE RECEIVED A FRESH BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were

anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed.”

When you think of a person that brings UNPLEASANT feelings, see that AS a call to INSTANT PRAYER for that person and for yourself.

Have Compassion on all in need. When or if you don't, THEN pray – agonize with God for your heart of stone to be made into a heart of flesh.

How is it with you beloved?

- Are you walking by faith day by day?
- Are you connected to God—spending time with Him alone?
- Are you receiving a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit each morning like Jesus did?
- Are you listening to God or is your prayer life a one-way street?
- Do you know the voice of God like Abraham of old?
- Are you sharing with friends, neighbors, co-workers and loved ones—what God is doing in your life? How the Lord is answering your prayers? Experiencing the thrill of seeing their face light up when truth dawns in their mind? Seeing a life changed into the beauty of the Lord our God?
- Are you partaking of the divine nature of Christ by way of a devotional life with Him—growing deeper & deeper in Christ?

Lord, help us...

- to know Jesus,
- to trust Jesus, and
- to love Jesus.