

Future NEWS

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TRUMPET AFTER TRUMPET

The angel, the mighty angel from heaven, is to lighten the earth with his glory, while he cries mightily with a loud voice, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen” (Revelation 18:2).

Oh, how I wish the church to arise and shine because the glory of the Lord has risen upon her. What can we not do in God if every human agency is doing its very utmost! “Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). We would lose faith and courage in the conflict if we were not sustained by the power of God. Every form of evil is to spring into intense activity. Evil angels unite their powers with evil men, and as they have been in constant conflict and attained an experience in the best modes of deception and battle, and have been strengthening for centuries, they will not yield the last great final contest without a desperate struggle. All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide-awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels with our lamps. What is this? Grace, Grace.

The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us, and the Captain of the Lord’s host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. **Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded**, vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth.

Scenes of stupendous interest are right upon us, and these things will be sure indications of the presence of Him who has directed in every aggressive movement, [the One] who has accompanied the march of His cause through all the ages, and who has graciously pledged Himself to be with His people in all their conflicts to the end of the world. He will vindicate His truth. He will cause it to triumph. He is ready to supply His faithful ones with motives and power of purpose, inspiring them with hope and courage and valor in increased activity as the time is at hand. *Manuscript Releases*, volume 14, 286–287.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The ministry of *Future for America* is to proclaim the final warning message of Revelation 14 as identified within the prophecies of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The end-time fulfillment of Bible prophecy is no longer future—for it is taking place before our eyes. The historic, prophetic understanding of Seventh-day Adventism is now present truth. We are the final generation. Our emphasis on the prophetic word includes all the counsel of God's Word. To know what lies ahead is useless if we do not possess the experience to stand during these solemn times. Through obedience to God's law, and faith in the promises of God's Word, we are to receive that experience.

Coupled with the prophetic message, *Future for America* emphasizes all aspects of the medical missionary work. The "entering wedge"—medical missionary work—must be practiced by those who are to finish God's work in these final hours.

During this time period, country living becomes more essential with each passing moment. *Future for America* upholds and promotes this end-time truth. God's people must prepare for the coming storm, and that preparation includes the experience of learning how to survive in a simple fashion, away from the great centers of population.

Future for America intends to print and distribute truth-filled literature, while helping to establish lay-printing operations in parts of the Lord's vineyard where faithful brethren do not have the means to raise up a printing operation with their own resources.

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CLASS-WARFARE POLITICIANS

Those who want to take our money and gain power over us have discovered the magic formula: Get us envious or angry at others and we will surrender, in installments, not only our money but our freedom. The most successful dictators of the 20th century—Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Mao—all used this formula and now class warfare politicians here are doing the same.

A new intolerance divides us by Race and Gender and Ethnicity and Language, and into Minority and Majority, and generally makes many out of one, reversing that most American of mottos, E Pluribus Unum. Indeed, Al Gore, in one of his dimmer moments, once actually defined that phrase as “out of one, many.” Which is good enough for government work in these multicultural times.

Leaders from both parties—Republican Senator Orrin Hatch and Democrat Ted Kennedy—have vowed to push through a new, wide-reaching federal “hate crimes” bill before the end of the current session. A “hate crimes” law would make crimes motivated by enmity toward blacks, gays or other protected groups into a special federal offense. . . . The proposed law declares that criminals motivated by a government-designated set of intolerable ideas—racism, sexism, religious sectarianism, anti-homosexuality—deserve special prosecution and additional punishment. But to subject someone to trial and punishment on the basis of his ideas—regardless of how despicable those ideas might be—constitutes a politicization of criminal law. . . . A “hate crimes” law would expand the law’s concern from criminal action to “criminal thought.” It would institute the premise that the purpose of our legal system is not to defend the rights of the victim, but to punish socially unacceptable ideas. This is a premise that should be abhorrent to a free society. . . . It is an attempt to import into America’s legal system a class of crimes formerly reserved only to dictatorships: political crimes. Instead, we should insist on the one principle that forms the foundation for the protection of all rights, i.e., that the purpose of law is to punish criminals for initiating force against others, not for holding bad ideas. *www.federalist.com*, January 27, 2004.

“It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity.” *The Great Controversy*, 590.

INTER-GENERATIONAL INTIMACY

Most Americans view pedophilia as an abomination. But gay activists are now openly advocating it, calling it ‘inter-generational intimacy.’ . . . We can’t afford to keep silent about this issue. God help us if the barbarians in our midst are able to convince the American people that child molestation is just another fashionable trend of the twenty-first century. *www.federalist.com*

SPECIAL GOVERNMENT-FUNDED SCHOOLS

The existence of the Harvey Milk School of New York City, a special school for gays, may put a dent in the “wall of separation” argument against school vouchers. The school is a specially funded school “designed to meet the needs of homosexual, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth.” With an enrollment of 170, the school is receiving nearly \$19,000 for each of its unusually-chosen students.

If all it takes to get your own school is to spell out your unique needs and preferences, there are plenty of people who could get in line to make their case. Indeed, in Asheville, North Carolina, there are now two public charter-schools also established on such a basis. One of those two schools advertises itself as being especially devoted to environmental concerns. The other is founded with unique commitments to the arts. Both of those schools advertise themselves as “tuition-free,” and both collect something over \$5,000 annually from the state for every student they enroll.

Christians should be treated the same way. If a homosexual (or an environmentalist or a lover of the arts) asks for and receives educational benefits from the state based on his own self-definition, no Christian should be excluded for doing the same. The existence of the Harvey Milk School in New York might seem preposterous. On the other hand, the rationale that allows it might be just what's needed to make the argument for economic justice for all in the area of education. *WORLD*, September 6, 2003.

NOW IS THE TIME

“Now is the time for God's people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few--this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason. The nation will be on the side of the great rebel leader.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, 137.

PURITANS AGAINST THE WALL

Religious liberty is under fire; the wall of separation seems about to fall away. The “free church in a free state” idea has always been a minority opinion in America. Now the church-over-staters, the state-over-churchers, Puritan theocrats, and a variety of politicians who care little for religion but a great deal about power are working fervently to erase the protections and privileges of separating church from state.

Evangelical Christians, whose roots are in Puritan New England, are trying to exercise newly organized political power. Many of them want America to be a theocracy with civil and religious morality intertwined. They are trying to impose their moral and doctrinal opinions on everyone.

Soul competence and freedom of conscience have never been tenets of Puritan theology. Politically zealous evangelicals are putting a battering ram against the wall of separation. A number of conservative Christians have organized into a powerful right-wing political movement, supporting ultra-conservative causes and political leaders. The fiery rhetoric of “culture wars” and the belligerence of an absolutist mind-set typify the style and strategy of the Religious Right.

Religion in America has never depended, does not now depend, and will not in the future depend upon government subsidies to survive. Only those theocrats and church-over-staters who believe government should finance religious affairs believe otherwise. [They] rightly say that the Judeo-Christian tradition has made a vital contribution to American government, but that contribution is best seen and experienced in one word—freedom. That includes freedom from coercion by government in religious matters; freedom from doctrinal orthodoxy imposed by legislative fiat; and freedom from state financial support for religious enterprises. *Liberty*, July/August 2003.

NEARER TO THE WORLD

The regulation adopted by the early colonists, of permitting only members of the church to vote or to hold office in the civil government, led to most pernicious results. This measure had been accepted as a means of preserving the purity of the state, but it resulted in the corruption of the church. . . . the churches came to consist . . . of unconverted persons . . . ignorant of the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Thus again was demonstrated the evil results, so often witnessed in the history of the church from the days of Constantine to the present, of attempting to build up the church by the aid of the state. . . . The union of the church with the state, be the degree never so slight, while it may appear to bring the world nearer to the church, does in reality but bring the church nearer to the world.” *The Great Controversy*, 297.

THE DANGER OF AMERICAN RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM

While most Americans, Christian or otherwise, recognize the importance of church and state separation, whether for the protection of the church from the government, or of government from the church, a large and increasingly powerful minority is coming to depise freedom of religion in its truest sense: the freedom to practice any religion, or no religion, according to the dictates of one's own conscience. Could America slip into a fundamentalist mode that parallels those of the nations we are desperately seeking to defend ourselves against?

The events of September 11 have paradoxically played right into the hands of fundamentalism here in America. It is gaining support from many moderates as extreme right-wing politicians have fused God and Jesus with government, patriotism, and the warding off of Islamic fundamentalist evils.

Karen Armstrong, one the foremost commentators on religious affairs in the US and Great Britain, says in "The Battle for God" that it is improbable that any sort of militant extremist fundamentalism could gain enough popularity in the US to threaten the public order. Nonetheless, she acknowledges that in an emergency state, such as economic or environmental catastrophe, such a force could gravely change the face of our nation. An emergency state is perhaps what should concern us at this particular moment in American history. To a degree, we have been in such a state since September 11. Similar to what Armstrong suggests, support for a politically militant Religious Right movement has dramatically increased since that fatal day, and religious conservatism has increasingly been played out in the public square.

The ramifications of our war with Iraq, regardless of its outcome, are sobering. Should the war aims backfire, our economy, foreign relations, and our own safety are all at risk; and depending on the severity of any crisis, it could ultimately lead to serious reaction from America's fundamentalists. Scholars commonly refer to them as reactionary; their predictably unpredictable nature could pose real danger.

In contrast, if the war and Iraqi rehabilitation are successful, much of the present [fundamentalist] agenda will gain the support of a larger segment of mainstream Americans and could prove fatal to many hitherto cherished American liberties, most particularly true religious freedom.

The implications beseech us to examine how to protect faith, freedom, and security in America. The solutions would be convincing politicians to uphold our Constitution and Bill of Rights, even when a majority of the population (or seeming majority) is in opposition, especially during times of high national security; and finally, exercising the necessary civic duty of convincing those religious conservatives inclined to do so that dismantling the wall between church and state most surely would result in their own loss of religious freedom. *Liberty*, July/August 2003.

"It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." *The Great Controversy*, 590.

THE WALL OF CONFUSION: IDENTITY CRISIS

Polls show the country is confused over its religious identity. A *Newsweek* poll found that 45% of the public believe America is a Christian or biblical nation, 45% think America is a secular nation, and 10% are not sure what the country is. Lobbyists and activists on both sides seem to be confused. Pro-separation of church and state organizations cry out that the conservatives are winning and that America is heading toward a theocracy run by religious fanatics. Conservative organizations cry out that the godless pagans are winning and that America as about to lose God's blessing, and possibly even be destroyed. To challenge the slogans, "God Bless America" and "In God We Trust," is seen as a softness on terrorism and a weakness on patriotism.

If the [pro-separation] wall view collapses, the result may be, not what its demolition experts intend (the building of a Christian nation), but the creation of a national electoral religion, up for a vote every two to four years. Combine the anti-separationists' victories with the public's new views on church-state issues, and the scales seem to be tilting in the direction of church-state cooperation—not separation. *Liberty*, September/October, 2003.

NATIONAL RUIN

“The people of the United States have been a favored people; but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and “national apostasy” will be registered in the books of heaven. The result of this apostasy will be national ruin.” *Maranatha*, 216.

CONGRESS AND PRESIDENT BUSH APPROVE VOUCHERS

After decades of resistance by the ultra-liberal *National Education Association* and much of the liberal establishment; the school-voucher program was finally passed by Congress. The Senate voted 65–28 on January 22 for the voucher program and the President will sign it into law. The plan will allow at least 1,700 poor Washington D.C. public-school students to receive as much as \$7,500 to help pay for a private-school education. *Christian Coalition* urges that school voucher programs be established by state legislatures all over America. www.christiancoalition.org

“Roman Catholic principles will be taken under the care and protection of the state. This national apostasy will speedily be followed by national ruin.” *Review and Herald*, June 15, 1897.

STATE FUNDING OF RELIGION = IMAGE OF THE BEAST

[There is] the very real possibility that broad and routine state funding might actually encourage majority religious groups to exclude people of other faith views. In fact, it is possible that government funding could actually be applied with just such an intention.

Most people of faith in the United States see religious education and other religious activity as an active sharing of faith, but for much of the world, these are ways to protect and exclude, and state support is a way for them to dispatch their opposition. That was once a pattern even here in the Americas. A Constitution and the compromises that went into its formulation broke the cycle of state-empowered religious aggression.

A siege-mentality comes more easily in a time of national and religious crisis....a time like ours. You know; clash of cultures, secularism, and the threat of sects. This is the worst time to empower a threatened majority with power and/or money. *Liberty*, September/October, 2003.

IN DEFENSE OF TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

“A great work is to be accomplished through the instrumentality of man; for we are to co-operate with God in pressing back the tide of human woe. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we may be faithful, whole-hearted workers to stand in defense of truth and righteousness, and keep the Lord and his honor continually in mind. Let the perception be clear as to what is due to God for his benevolence in giving the gift of his Son to the human family. Let our liberalities flow toward God. Let thank-offerings be presented to Jesus, and as you gain clearer perceptions of your past deficiencies, let it be made manifest that you are seeking to make decided reformation in accordance with your faith.” *Review and Herald*, November 13, 1894.

HOW THE WHITE HOUSE'S FAITH-BASED BIAS TILTS THE PLAYING FIELD

President George W. Bush and other boosters of the “faith-based initiative” insist that the effort is intended to create a “level playing field” between religious and non-religious groups. But new evidence indicates that the faith-based initiative isn't about a level playing field at all. It's about tilting the field dramatically in favor of religious groups.

Consider what happened to the *Western Massachusetts Shelter for Homeless Veterans*.

Last year, the Northampton shelter lost more than \$400,000 in federal funding. Despite the shelter's long and proven track record of serving veterans, the money, shelter officials were told, would go to religious groups instead. The shelter got the money back this year—but only after its director, John Downing, emphasized the religious and spiritual services the facility provides. Downing felt playing up the religious component would make the center more attractive to the federal government, and he was right.

Not far away in Rhode Island, several local service organizations that have been serving their communities for years have been denied federal funding. Why? The money is going to faith-based organizations instead—even though the religious groups, as one local newspaper put it, “have no record of success.”

Social-service providers are clearly getting the message that they have a better shot at a federal grant if they emphasize a religious component. These agency leaders know exactly what is going on: The administration doesn't want a level playing field; it is biased toward religious providers.

Bush and his backers are careful to dress this up for public consumption. They never come out and say that they are discriminating in favor of religious groups. Instead, they claim that religious groups are more effective than their secular counterparts, but no objective data backs up this claim.

In June, Religious Right leader Charles W. Colson's *Prison Fellowship* trumpeted claims that its *Inner Change* program reduced recidivism rates among prisoners. A press release went out, and administration officials yelled “hallelujah,” backed by the predictable amen chorus from *The Wall Street Journal's* editorial page. But there was one problem: A public policy professor at the University of California at Los Angeles analyzed the data and found that *Inner Change* had not reduced the recidivism rates. In fact, inmates in *Inner Change* had returned to prison at a slightly higher rate than a control group! Colson's group did not like this result, so it cooked the data.

Is the administration's tilt toward faith-based funding making a difference in the lives of people? Absolutely—but not a positive one.

It's bad enough that this new approach violates church-state separation. The next time you hear an administration official promoting faith-based services, remember what's really going on. It's not about ending unequal treatment or leveling playing fields. The goal is preferential treatment for religious groups—with your tax dollars paying the way. *Church & State*, September, 2003.

“Spiritualism is about to take the world captive. There are many who think that Spiritualism is upheld through trickery and imposture; but this is far from the truth. Superhuman power is working in a variety of ways, and few have any idea as to what will be the manifestations of Spiritualism in the future. The foundation for the success of Spiritualism has been laid in the assertions that have been made from the pulpits of our land. The ministers have proclaimed, as Bible doctrines, falsehoods that have originated from the arch-deceiver. The doctrine of consciousness after death, of the spirits of the dead being in communion with the living, has no foundation in the Scriptures, and yet this theory is affirmed as truth. Through this false doctrine the way has been opened for the spirits of devils to deceive the people in representing themselves as the dead. Satanic agencies personate the dead, and thus bring souls into captivity. Satan has a religion, he has a synagogue and devout worshipers. To swell the ranks of his devotees he uses all manner of deception.” *Signs of the Times*, May 28, 1894.

SPIRITUALISM AND CONFUSION IN THE USA

Although a comparison of current beliefs to those held over the past two decades shows that Americans' views about life after death have been relatively stable over time, new perceptions about the hereafter are being grafted into the traditional perspectives. For instance, nearly 1 in 5 adults (18%) now contends that people are reincarnated after death. And one-third of Americans (34%) believe that it is possible to communicate with others after their death.

As evidence that this belief is gaining traction, consider that nearly half of all Busters (48%) embrace the concept of communication with the dead, while just 35% of Boomers (39-57) and 15% of Elders (ages 58+) do so.

George Barna, the president of the company that conducted the research, pointed out that "Americans' willingness to embrace beliefs that are logically contradictory and their preference for blending different faith views together create unorthodox religious viewpoints." For instance, he noted that among born again Christians—who believe that they will experience eternal existence in Heaven solely because they have confessed their sins to God and are depending upon Jesus Christ to spare them from eternal punishment or rejection—10% believe that people are reincarnated after death, 29% claim it is possible to communicate with the dead, and 50% contend that a person can earn salvation based upon good works.

"Many committed born again Christians believe that people have multiple options for gaining entry to Heaven. They are saying, in essence, 'Personally, I am trusting Jesus Christ as my means of gaining God's permanent favor and a place in Heaven—but someone else could get to Heaven based upon living an exemplary life.'

Millions of Americans have redefined grace to mean that God is so eager to save people from Hell that He will change His nature and universal principles for their individual benefit. It is astounding how many people develop their faith according to their feelings or cultural assumptions rather than biblical teachings."

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COURTS OF JUSTICE ARE CORRUPT

"Courts of justice are corrupt. Rulers are actuated by desire for gain and love of sensual pleasure." *The Great Controversy*, 586.

THE FINAL GUARDIANS

Our majoritarian institutions, presidents and Congress, governors and the general assemblies are not the final arbiters of that which is or is not constitutional. Judicial review, uniquely American, is the genius of our system. The courts are the final guardians of our individual and minority rights. When the majority of the US Supreme Court fails to follow its own precedents, fails to consider the great history and utility of the establishment clause, we're in trouble. *Liberty*, September/October 2003.

"And this is the religion which Protestants are beginning to look upon with so much favor, and which will eventually be united with Protestantism. This union will not, however, be effected by a change in Catholicism; for Rome never changes. She claims infallibility. It is Protestantism that will change. **The adoption of liberal ideas** on its part will bring it where it can clasp the hand of Catholicism." *Review and Herald*, June 1, 1886.

"LIVING CONSTITUTION" TO DESTROY US SUPREME COURT

Justice Antonin Scalia recently delivered a memorable speech. In it, he expressed his exasperation with other jurists' views of the Constitution as a "living document" that morphs over time, citing such decisions as abortion, the death penalty and assisted suicide and equally pillorying liberals and conservatives for such novel constitutional inventions. "I hate to think what the next Supreme Court nomination hearings are going to be like because what both sides are looking for are judges who agree with them as to what the new Constitution that they create ought to be," Scalia commented. "It's a very sad ending to the game. . . . I've been predicting this for 20 years, that ultimately this theory of the living Constitution will destroy us, it will destroy the federal courts. Once the people figure out what the game is, they will say, 'We will select our judges on the basis of who will create the Constitution that we desire.'"

Scalia pleaded that he be called an "originalist" in constitutional interpretation, saying, "If you have to be bound by what it meant when it was adopted you often have to reach results you don't particularly like."

He queried, "If you don't want your judges confined by that, what do you want your judges confined by? Its meaning doesn't change. To achieve change, all you need is a legislature and a ballot box. Things will change just as fast as you like." *www.Federalist.com*

ACTION OF JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES

"The lamblike horns and dragon voice of the symbol point to a striking contradiction between the professions and the practice of the nation thus represented. The 'speaking' of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities." *The Great Controversy*, 442.

CHRISTIAN ANGER ABOUT THE SUPREME COURT

If the church of Jesus Christ does not unite and stand with this courageous Justice [Antonin Scalia] . . . I am convinced that God will bring swift and powerful judgment on our blessed land. What if the pastors of America came together with a common voice to mobilize millions of Christians into a single powerful force that cannot, and will not, be ignored by the powers-that-be, from the Court House to the White House?

Your petition lets the Supreme Court know that they will now have to deal with us as we Christians let our voices and our anger be known from one end of the nation to the other. From a *Vision America* solicitation letter, December 20, 2003.

PUBLIC FAVOR

"Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected." *The Great Controversy*, 592.

US NATIONAL MOTTO: CONFUSED

The Supreme Court has yet to hear a case challenging the constitutionality of the national motto. But the issue has made it as far as an appeals court. In 1970 an appeals court ruled that, "it is quite obvious that the national motto and the slogan on coinage and currency, 'In God We Trust,' has nothing whatsoever to do with the establishment of religion. Its use is of a patriotic or ceremonial character and bears no true resemblance to a governmental sponsorship of a religious exercise." Which appeals court? Why, the Ninth Circuit Court in San Francisco, the same one that ruled last June that "under God" in the Pledge [of Allegiance] violates the establishment clause. *Liberty*, September/October, 2003.

"In that grand old document which our forefathers set forth as their bill of rights--the Declaration of Independence--they declared: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' And the Constitution guarantees, in the most explicit terms, the inviolability of conscience: 'No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office of public trust under the United States.' 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.'

"The framers of the Constitution recognized the eternal principle that man's relation with his God is above human legislation, and his rights of conscience inalienable. Reasoning was not necessary to establish this truth; we are conscious of it in our own bosoms. It is this consciousness which, in defiance of human laws, has sustained so many martyrs in tortures and flames. They felt that their duty to God was superior to human enactments, and that man could exercise no authority over their consciences. It is an inborn principle which nothing can eradicate.' --Congressional documents (U.S.A.), serial No. 200, document No. 271." *The Great Controversy*, 295.

HAVING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW IN THE USA MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Any objective social analyst would conclude that the United States faces its fair share of moral and spiritual problems. A new research study from the *Barna Research Group*, suggests that a large share of the nation's moral and spiritual challenges is directly attributable to the absence of a biblical worldview among Americans.

Citing the findings from a just-completed national survey of 2033 adults that showed only 4% of adults have a biblical worldview as the basis of their decision-making, researcher George Barna described the outcome. "Although most people own a Bible and know some of its content, our research found that most Americans have little idea how to integrate core biblical principles to form a unified and meaningful response to the challenges and opportunities of life. We're often more concerned with survival amidst chaos than with experiencing truth and significance."

The research indicated that everyone has a worldview, but relatively few people have a biblical worldview. The survey discovered that only 9% of born again Christians have such a perspective on life. The numbers were even lower among other religious classifications: Protestants (7%), adults who attend mainline Protestant churches (2%) and Catholics (less than one-half of 1%). The denominations that produced the highest proportions of adults with a biblical worldview were non-denominational Protestant churches (13%), Pentecostal churches (10%) and Baptist churches (8%). Among the most prevalent alternative worldviews was postmodernism, which seemed to be the dominant perspective among the two youngest generations (i.e., the Busters and Mosaics).

For the purposes of the research, a biblical worldview was defined as believing that absolute moral truths exist; that such truth is defined by the Bible; and firm belief in six specific religious views. Those views were that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life; God is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe and He stills rules it today; salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned; Satan is real; a Christian has a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with other people; and the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings.

One of the most striking insights from the research was the influence of such a way of thinking upon people's behavior. Adults with a biblical worldview possessed radically different views on morality, held divergent religious beliefs, and demonstrated vastly different lifestyle choices.

People's views on morally acceptable behavior are deeply impacted by their worldview. Upon comparing the perspectives of those who have a biblical worldview with those who do not, the former group were 31 times less likely to accept cohabitation (2% versus 62%, respectively); 18 times less likely to endorse drunkenness (2% versus 36%); 15 times less likely to condone gay sex (2% versus 31%); 12 times less likely to accept profanity (3% versus 37%); and 11 times less likely to describe adultery as morally acceptable (4% versus 44%). In addition, less than one-half of one percent of those with a biblical worldview said voluntary exposure to pornography was morally acceptable (compared to 39% of other adults), and a similarly miniscule proportion endorsed abortion (compared to 46% of adults who lack a biblical worldview).

Among the more intriguing lifestyle differences were the lesser propensity for those with a biblical worldview to gamble (they were eight times less likely to buy lottery tickets and 17 times less likely to place bets); to get drunk (three times less likely); and to view pornography (two times less common). They were also twice as likely to have discussed spiritual matters with other people in the past month and twice as likely to have fasted for religious reasons during the preceding month. While one out of every eight adults who lack a biblical worldview had sexual relations with someone other than their spouse during the prior month, less than one out of every 100 individuals who have such a worldview had done so.

Adults who have a biblical worldview possessed a somewhat different demographic profile than those who did not. For instance, individuals who attended college were much more likely than those who did not to have this perspective (6% versus 2%, respectively). Married adults were more than twice as likely as adults who had never been wed to hold such a worldview (5% versus 2%). Whites (5%) were slightly more likely than either blacks (3%) or Hispanics (3%) to hold this ideology. One of the largest gaps was between Republicans (10% of whom had a biblical worldview), Independents (2%) and Democrats (1%).

Residents of Texas and North Carolina were more likely than people in other states to have a biblical worldview. Among the states in which such a worldview was least common were Louisiana and the six states in New England. The nation's largest state—California—was average (i.e., 4% of its residents had a biblical worldview).

Attributes such as gender, age and household income showed no statistical relationship to the possession of a biblical worldview. *www.barna.org*, December 1, 2003.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Hebrews 11:6.

SECULARIZING THE EUROPEAN UNION?

Twenty-two of Europe's wise men, from ex-prime ministers to Nobel prize winners, have denounced France's insistence on secularizing the European Union and establishing a strict separation between Church and state. In an essay in yesterday's *Le Monde*, the elder statesmen said in Europe, Christianity was "at the root of the fundamental notion of the individual".

They said Christianity had a paradoxical history, as it both created the European conscience and caused wars. The role of religion had been debated throughout centuries of intellectual and scientific advance, but had ultimately always come down to a choice for individuals and their consciences, they added.

The authors included former presidents Richard Weizsaecker of Germany, Mario Soares of Portugal and Arpad Goncz of Hungary. "Everything we see today shows the limits of a narrowly 'secularist' vision in European societies," the essay said. "The end of ideological oppression and the rise of various forms of fundamentalism lead to a better understanding of reality."

The remarks were directed both at the authors of the new EU constitution, which contains no reference to Christianity, and at France, where President Jacques Chirac is considering a new law to reinforce the secularism of national institutions. *Telegraph Group Limited*, November, 14, 2003.

U.N. POWER GROWS

The Bush administration, trying to rescue its troubled plan to restore sovereignty to Iraq, is joining Iraqi leaders to press the United Nations to play a role in choosing an interim government in Baghdad. *The New York Times*, January 15, 2004. "Enlightened Internationalism"

Maybe all that liberal talk about involving the United Nations wasn't so squishy an un-patriotic after all, if one believes it's now a good idea to lose less in blood and treasure Iraq. Maybe the true patriotism—the best nationalism—is enlightened internationalism, just as presidents from both parties have believed since World War II. *Newsweek*, September 15, 2003.

"The third wall which the papacy will bring down in order to take control of the entire world is the symbolic 'wall of national sovereignty.' The likely structure which will be used to control the world is the United Nations. Already, within the laws which have already been developed by the United Nations, we find the legal principles designed to remove national sovereignty. This organization has already written and passed laws which supercede the national laws of individual countries. In fact, many of these countries—including the United States—have already signed these agreements, placing the laws of the individual nations in subjection to the laws of the world government." *The Final Rise and Fall of the King of the North*, 26.

CALL IN THE UN

Almost no one urging a buildup [in Iraq] has been suggesting American troops. For one thing, there are no more American troops available. We would have to move divisions out of Europe or East Asia or mobilize the National Guard. Other than a few neoconservatives, who cannot bear to utter the words "United Nations," everyone understands that more troops can only come in the form of a multinational force under U.N. mandate. *Newsweek*, September 8, 2003.

BIG ASIAN BANK POWER

Last year, according to Treasury statistics, foreigners bought 58% of the securities that Treasury sold to investors. Some 60% of that 58% was bought by central banks. Although Treasury doesn't say so, a large percentage of that went to the central banks of Japan and China. So you can imagine what would happen if, for reasons financial or political, either bank stopped buying Treasuries. Or, heaven help us, began selling them heavily. *Newsweek*, September 8, 2003.

BUSH COST ME MY JOB, KIDS AND HOME

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak my mind. I lost my job in this last year. When Clinton was president I was secure and prosperous, but this last year, we had to close our operations. We simply could not compete with foreign labor. This foreign labor worked for low pay under very bad conditions. They worked long shifts, and some even died on the job.

This competition could hardly be called "fair". I was forced out of the workplace I had been for the last thirty-four years. Not a single government program was set up to help me.

How can Bush call himself a "compassionate conservative?" Far worse, I lost two of my sons in Bush's evil war in Iraq. They gave their lives for their country, and for what? So that Bush's oil buddies could get rich! The pain of losing my sons is indescribable.

While it is next to trivial to the loss of my sons, I regret to say that I also lost my home. I simply have nothing left. How can Bush call himself a Christian when he neglects people like me? I am a senior citizen with various health needs, and I am not in a position where I can begin a new career. I was reduced to the point where I was virtually living in a hole in the ground. All because of President Bush.

And when the authorities found me there, did they have any compassion for my misfortune and ailments? No, I was arrested. Mr. Bush, I dare you to look me in the face and tell me you are a compassionate man! I dare you to tell me you are a Christian. If I had any money left, I would donate it to the Democratic Party. If Al Gore had been elected in 2000, I would still have a job, a home, and most importantly—my dear sons. Regards, Saddam Hussein

IRAQ

Israel is the nation most often mentioned in the Bible, but do you know which nation is second? It is Iraq. However, that is not the name that is used in the Bible. The names used in the Bible are Babel, Babylon, the land of Shinar and Mesopotamia. The word Mesopotamia means between the two rivers—between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The name Iraq, means country with deep roots. Indeed Iraq is a country with deep roots and is a very significant country in the Bible.

The garden of Eden was in Iraq. Adam and Eve were created in Iraq. Satan made his first recorded appearance on planet earth in Iraq. Mesopotamia, which is now Iraq, was the cradle of civilization. Noah built the ark in Iraq. The tower of Babel was in Iraq. The confusion of the languages took place in Iraq. Abraham was from Ur, which is in Southern Iraq. Isaac's wife Rebecca is from Nahor, which is in Iraq. Jacob met Rachel in Iraq. Jonah preached in Nineveh, which is in Iraq. Assyria, which is in Iraq conquered the ten northern tribes of Israel. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq. The book of Nahum was a prophecy against a city in Iraq. Amos cried out in Iraq. Babylon, which is in Iraq destroyed Jerusalem. Daniel was in the lion's den, in Iraq. The three Hebrews were in the fire, in Iraq. Belshazzar, the King of Babylon saw the "writing on the wall" in Iraq. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, carried the Jews captive into Iraq. Ezekiel preached in Iraq. The wise men from the east were from Iraq. Peter preached in Iraq. No other nation, except Israel, has more history and prophecy associated with it than Iraq.

POPE CALLS FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II rang in the New Year on Thursday with a renewed call for peace in the Middle East and Africa and the creation of a new world order based on respect for the dignity of man and equality among nations.

John Paul presided over a morning Mass inside St. Peter's Basilica to mark the *World Day of Peace*, which the Roman Catholic Church celebrates every January 1. He appeared in good form, delivering his entire homily in a strong and clear voice despite a relatively tiring holiday schedule.

This year, John Paul directed his thoughts to continuing conflicts around the globe. But he stressed that to bring about peace, there needs to be a new respect for international law and the creation of a **“new international order” based on the goals of the United Nations.**

He called for “an order that is able to give adequate solutions to today's problems based on the dignity of the human being, on an integral development of society, on solidarity among nations rich and poor, on the sharing of resources and the extraordinary results of scientific and technical progress.” The pope lamented continuing violence between Israel and the Palestinians, and also offered his prayers for his ambassador to Burundi, Archbishop Michael Courtney, who was gunned down by assailants this week as he returned from a funeral.

John Paul said Courtney was killed “while he carried out his mission in favor of dialogue and reconciliation” in the central African country, which has been wracked by violence for a decade.

“Let us pray for him, hoping that his example and sacrifice will bring about the fruits of peace in Burundi and the world,” he said. Earlier this month, John Paul issued a formal document marking the *World Day of Peace* in which he called for **a reform of the United Nations and international law to deal with the evolving threat of terrorism.**

He said a new respect for international law was the only way to achieve peace and guarantee against the arbitrary use of force. He did not mention the United States by name, but his message appeared aimed at the US anti-terrorism campaign—and in particular at Washington's pre-emptive war in Iraq, which was launched without the specific authorization of the United Nations.

John Paul was a vocal critic of the Iraq war, dispatching envoys to Washington and Baghdad to try to prevent hostilities from breaking out and exhorting world leaders that war was not inevitable and was “always a defeat for humanity.”

“Because peace is possible ... it is necessary,” he said during his homily Thursday. The New Year's Mass was the last major celebration of the Christmas season for John Paul, who is 83 and suffers from Parkinson's disease, which makes it difficult for him to speak, as well as knee and hip ailments that make it almost impossible for him to walk or stand.

He cut back some of his holiday activities and scrapped two traditional papal events—the ordination of bishops January 6 and baptisms on January 11.

But throughout the Christmas season, he has appeared far stronger than during the series of celebrations in October marking his 25th anniversary as pope. Then, he was unable to deliver many of his homilies and had to have others to read them on his behalf.

CLOTHED WITH CHRISTLIKE GARMENTS

“The Roman Church now presents a fair front to the world, covering with apologies her record of horrible cruelties. She has clothed herself in Christlike garments; but she is unchanged. Every principle of the papacy that existed in past ages exists today. The doctrines devised in the darkest ages are still held. Let none deceive themselves. The papacy that Protestants are now so ready to honor is the same that ruled the world in the days of the Reformation, when men of God stood up, at the peril of their lives, to expose her iniquity. She possesses the same pride and arrogant assumption that lorded it over kings and princes, and claimed the prerogatives of God. Her spirit is no less cruel and despotic now than when she crushed out human liberty and slew the saints of the Most High.

“The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be, the apostasy of the latter times. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. It is a part of her policy to assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose; but beneath the variable appearance of the chameleon she conceals the invariable venom of the serpent. ‘Faith ought not to be kept with heretics, nor persons suspected of heresy’, she declares. Shall this power, whose record for a thousand years is written in the blood of the saints, be now acknowledged as a part of the church of Christ?” *The Great Controversy*, 571.

WHERE WE ARE IN PROPHETIC HISTORY

“While the Protestant world is making concessions to Rome, and danger is increasing on every hand, let us arouse to comprehend the situation, and to see the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen lift up the voice, and give with clearness the message which is present truth for this time. ‘For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?’ 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 religious liberty they have so long enjoyed.” *Signs of the Times*, November 28, 1900.

“In these times of special interest, the guardians of the flock of God should teach the people that **the spiritual powers are in controversy.**” *General Conference Bulletin*, March 4, 1895.

“The student should . . . understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy and should learn to **trace their working through the records of history and prophecy**, to the great consummation.” *Education*, 190.

“We must have a knowledge of the Scriptures, that we may **trace down the lines of prophecy**, and understand the specifications given by the prophets, and by Christ and the apostles; that we may not be ignorant; but be able to see that the day is approaching, so that with increased zeal and effort, we may exhort one another to faithfulness, piety, and holiness.” *Review and Herald*, July 31, 1888.

THEY WILL EXPLAIN THEMSELVES

“Daniel is standing in his lot and in his place. The prophecies of Daniel and of John are to be understood. They interpret each other. They give to the world truths which every one should understand. These prophecies are to be witnesses in the world. By their fulfillment in these last days they will explain themselves.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 7, 949.

CONFIRM THE TRUTH GOD HAS GIVEN

“The very same Satan is at work to undermine the faith of the people of God at this time. There are persons ready to catch up every new idea. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation are misinterpreted. These persons do not consider that the truth has been set forth at the appointed time by the very men whom God was leading to do this special work. These men followed on step by step in the very fulfillment of prophecy, and those who have not had a personal experience in this work, are to take the Word of God and believe on ‘their word’ who have been led by the Lord in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. These messages, received and acted upon, are doing their work to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God. **If we search the Scriptures to confirm the truth God has given His servants for the world, we shall be found proclaiming the first, second, and third angels’ messages.**” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 111.

THE “EVIDENCES” WE HAVE RECEIVED

“My brethren, the value of the evidences of truth that we have received during the past half century, is above estimate. These evidences are as treasure hidden in a field. Search for them. **Study the Bible truths that for fifty years have been calling us out from the world.** Present this evidence in clear, plain lines. Those who have been long in the truth, and those who have recently received the truth, must now dig for the buried heavenly treasure. Let every man work to the point. Study the Word of God. Revive the evidences given in the past. ‘Search the Scriptures,’ Christ said; ‘for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.’

“Those who stand before the people as teachers of truth are to grapple with great themes. They are not to occupy precious time in talking of trivial subjects. Let them study the word, and preach the word. Let the word be in their hands as a sharp, two-edged sword. Let it testify to past truths, and show what is to be in the future.

“Christ came from heaven to give to John the great, wonderful truths that are to shape our lives, and that by us are to be proclaimed to the world. We are to keep abreast of the times, bearing a clear, intelligent testimony, guided by the unction of the Holy Spirit.” *Review and Herald*, April 19, 1906.

PAST TRUTHS SHOW THE FUTURE

“In history and prophecy the Word of God portrays the long continued conflict between truth and error. That conflict is yet in progress. **Those things which have been, will be repeated.**” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 109.

“These messages we are to give to the world in publications, in discourses, showing in the line of prophetic history **the things that have been and the things that will be.**” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 104–105.

“Revelation is a sealed book, but it is also an opened book. It records marvelous events that are to take place in the last days of this earth’s history. The teachings of this book are definite, not mystical and unintelligible. In it the same line of prophecy is taken up as in Daniel. **Some prophecies God has repeated, thus showing that importance must be given to them. The Lord does not repeat things that are of no great consequence.**” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 9, 7–8.

MIGHTY TRUTHS HAVE BEEN BURIED

“Mighty truths have been buried beneath the sophistry of error, but **they will be found** by the diligent searcher. As he finds and opens the treasure house of the precious jewels of truth, it is no robbery; for all who appreciate these jewels may possess them, and then they too have a treasure house to open to others. He who imparts does not deprive himself of the treasure; for as he examines it that he may present it in such a way as to attract others, he finds new treasures.” *The Upward Look*, 205.

OLD TRUTHS WILL BE REVEALED IN NEW ASPECTS

“So in searching the field and digging for the precious jewels of truth, hidden treasures are discerned. Unexpectedly we find precious ore that is to be gathered and treasured. And the search is to be continued. Hitherto very much of the treasure found has lain near the surface, and was easily obtained. When the search is properly conducted every effort is made to keep a pure understanding and heart. When the mind is kept open and is constantly searching the field of revelation, **we shall find rich deposits of truth.** Old truths will be revealed in new aspects, and truths will appear which have been overlooked in the search. *Manuscript Releases*, volume 1, 37.

“Search the Word of God diligently for subjects that will instruct the ignorant and feed the flock of God. Become so full of the matter that you will be able to bring forth from the treasure house of His Word things **new and old.**” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 221.

VIEWS OF PROPHECY

“The proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages has been located by the Word of Inspiration. Not a peg or pin is to be removed. No human authority has any more right to change the location of these messages than to substitute the New Testament for the Old. The Old Testament is the gospel in figures and symbols. The New Testament is the substance. One is as essential as the other. The Old Testament presents lessons from the lips of Christ, and these **lessons have not lost their force in any particular.**

“The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed. It is just as essential now as ever before that they shall be repeated to those who are seeking for the truth. By **pen and voice** we are to sound the proclamation, showing **their order**, and **the application** of the prophecies that bring us to the third angel’s message. There cannot be a third without the first and second. These messages we are to give to the world in **publications**, in **discourses**, showing **in the line of prophetic history the things that have been and the things that will be.**

“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but **that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days.** The Scripture says, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased’ (Daniel 12:4). **When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, ‘Time shall be no longer.’ (See Revelation 10:6.)** The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. **By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.**

“‘And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters’ [Revelation 14:6, 7].

“This message, if heeded, will call the attention of every nation and kindred and tongue and people to a close examination of the Word, and to the true light in regard to the power that has changed the seventh-day Sabbath to a spurious sabbath. The only true God has been forsaken, His law has been discarded, His sacred Sabbath institution has been trampled in the dust by the man of sin. The fourth commandment, so plain and explicit, has been ignored. The Sabbath memorial, declaring who the living God is, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, has been torn down, and a spurious sabbath has been given to the world in its place. Thus a breach has been made in the law of God. A false sabbath could not be a true standard.

“In the first angel’s message men are called upon to worship God, our Creator, who made the world and all things that are therein. They have paid homage to an institution of the Papacy, making of no effect the law of Jehovah, but **there is to be an increase of knowledge on this subject.**

“The message of Revelation 14, proclaiming that the hour of God’s judgment is come, is given in the time of the end; and **the angel of Revelation 10 is represented as having one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, showing that the message will be carried to distant lands, the ocean will be crossed, and the islands of the sea will hear the proclamation of the last message of warning to our world.**

“The message proclaimed by the angel flying in the midst of heaven is the everlasting gospel, the same gospel that was declared in Eden when God said to the serpent, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel’ [Genesis 3:15]. Here was the first promise of a Saviour who would stand on the field of battle to contest the power of Satan and prevail against him. Christ came to our world to represent the character of God as it is represented in His holy law; for His law is a transcript of His character. Christ was both the law and the gospel. The angel that proclaims the everlasting gospel proclaims the law of God; for the gospel of salvation brings men to obedience of the law, whereby their characters are formed after the divine similitude.

“In the 58th chapter of Isaiah, the work of those who worship God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, is specified: ‘They that shall be of Thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations.’ God’s memorial, His seventh-day Sabbath, will be uplifted. Isaiah 58: 12–14.

“The history of the church and the world, the loyal and the disloyal, is here plainly revealed. The loyal, under the proclamation of the third angel’s message, have turned their feet into the way of God’s commandments, to respect, to honor and glorify Him who created the heavens and the earth. The opposing forces have dishonored God by making a breach in His law, and when light from His Word has called attention to His holy commandments, revealing the breach made in the law by the Papal authority, then, to get rid of conviction, men have tried to destroy the whole law. But could they destroy it? No; for all who will search the Scriptures for themselves will see that the law of God stands immutable, eternal, and His memorial, the Sabbath, will endure through eternal ages, pointing to the only true God in distinction from all false gods.

“Satan has been persevering and untiring in his efforts to prosecute the work he began in heaven, to change the law of God. He has succeeded in making the world believe the theory he presented in heaven before his fall, that the law of God was faulty, and needed revising. A large part of the professed Christian church, by their attitude, if not by their words, show that they have accepted the same error. But if in one jot or tittle the law of God has been changed, Satan has gained on earth that which he could not gain in heaven. He has prepared his delusive snare, hoping to take captive the church and the world. But not all will be taken in the snare. A line of distinction is being drawn between the children of obedience and the children of disobedience, the loyal and true and the disloyal and untrue. Two great parties are developed, the worshipers of the beast and his image, and the worshipers of the true and living God.

“The message of Revelation 14, proclaiming that the hour of God’s judgment is come, is given in the time of the end; and the angel of Revelation 10 is represented as having one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, showing that the message will be carried to distant lands, the ocean will be crossed, and the islands of the sea will hear the proclamation of the last message of warning to our world.

““And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.’ This message announces the end of the prophetic periods. The disappointment of those who expected to see our Lord in 1844 was indeed bitter to those who had so ardently looked for His appearing. It was in the Lord’s order that this disappointment should come, and that hearts should be revealed.

“Not one cloud has fallen upon the church that God has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork the work of God but He has foreseen. All has taken place as He has predicted through His prophets. He has not left His church in darkness, forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and through His providence, acting in its appointed place in the world’s history, He has brought about that which His Holy Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell. All His purposes will be fulfilled and established. His law is linked with His throne, and Satanic agencies combined with human agencies cannot destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; it will live, and will succeed, although it may appear at times to be overshadowed. The gospel of Christ is the law exemplified in character. The deceptions practiced against it, every device for vindicating falsehood, every error forged by Satanic agencies, will eventually be eternally broken, and the triumph of truth will be like the appearing of the sun at noon day. The Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth with healing in His wings, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory.

“All that God has in prophetic history specified to be fulfilled in the past has been, and all that is yet to come in its order will be. **Daniel, God’s prophet, stands in his place.** John stands in his place. **In the Revelation the Lion of the tribe of Judah has opened to the students of prophecy the book of Daniel,** and thus is **Daniel standing in his place.** He bears his testimony, that which the Lord revealed to him in vision of the great and solemn events **which we must know as we stand on the very threshold of their fulfillment.**

“In history and prophecy the Word of God portrays the long continued conflict between truth and error. That conflict is yet in progress. **Those things which have been, will be repeated.** Old controversies will be revived, and new theories will be continually arising. But God’s people, who in their belief and fulfillment of prophecy have acted a part in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages, know where they stand. They have an experience that is more precious than fine gold. They are to stand firm as a rock, holding the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end.

“**A transforming power attended the proclamation of the first and second angels’ messages, as it attends the message of the third angel.** Lasting convictions were made upon human minds. **The power of the Holy Spirit was manifested.** There was diligent study of the Scriptures, point by point. Almost entire nights were devoted to earnest searching of the Word. We searched for the truth as for hidden treasures. The Lord revealed Himself to us. Light was shed on the prophecies, and we knew that we received divine instruction.

“This expresses something of the exercises we were passing through: ‘Bow down thine ear, and hear **the words of the wise,** and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?’ [Proverbs 22:17–21].

“**After** the great Disappointment **there were few** who set themselves to seek the Word with all their heart. But some souls would not settle down in discouragement and deny that the Lord had led them. To these the truth was opened point by point, and entwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. The searchers after truth felt that the identification of Christ with their nature and interest was complete. Truth was made to shine forth, beautiful in its simplicity, dignified with a power and invested with an assurance unknown before the Disappointment. **We could then proclaim the message in unity.**

“But among those who had not held fast their faith and experience, there was great confusion. Every conceivable opinion was presented as the message of truth; but the Lord’s voice was, ‘Believe them not; for I have not sent them.’

“We walked carefully with God. The message was to be given to the world, and we knew that this present light was the special gift of God. The impartation of this gift was the prerogative of God. His disappointed ones, who were still seeking after truth, were led step by step to communicate to the world that which had been communicated to them. The prophetic declarations were to be repeated, and the truth essential for salvation was to be made known. The work moved hard at first. Often the hearers rejected the message as unintelligible, and the conflict began in decided earnest, especially upon the Sabbath question. But the Lord manifested His presence. At times the veil which concealed His glory from our eyes was drawn aside. We beheld Him in the high and holy place.

“The Lord will not lead minds now to set aside the truth that the Holy Spirit has moved upon His servants in the past to proclaim.

“Many will honestly search the Word for light as those in the past have searched it; and they see light in the Word. But they did not pass over the ground in their experience, when these messages of warning were first proclaimed.

“Not having had this experience, some do not appreciate the value of the truths that have been to us as **waymarks**, and that have made us as a peculiar people what we are. They do not make a right application of the Scriptures, and thus they frame theories that are not correct. It is true that they quote an abundance of Scripture, and teach much that is true; but truth is so mixed with error as to lead to wrong conclusions.

“Yet because they can weave Scripture into their theories, they think they have a straight chain of truth. Many who did not have an experience in the rise of the messages, accept these erroneous theories, and are led into false paths, backward instead of forward. This is the enemy’s design.

“Satan is working that **the history of the Jewish nation may be repeated** in the experience of those who claim to believe present truth. The Jews had the Old Testament Scriptures, and supposed themselves conversant with them. But they made a woeful mistake. The prophecies that refer to the glorious second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven they regarded as referring to His first coming. Because He did not come according to their expectations, they turned away from Him. Satan knew just how to take these men in his net, and deceive and destroy them.

“Sacred, eternal truths had been given them in trust for the world. The treasures of the law and the gospel, united as closely as the Father is united with the Son, were to be presented to all the world. The prophet declares, ‘For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

“And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God’ [Isaiah 62:1–3].

“This is that which the Lord had spoken concerning Jerusalem. But when Jesus came to our world just as prophecy had declared He would come, His divinity clothed with humanity, with majesty and lowliness combined, His mission was misunderstood. The delusive hope for a temporal prince led to misapplication of Scripture.

“Jesus came as an infant of days, of poor parentage. But there were some who were willing to receive the heavenly Guest. For these the angel messengers veiled their glory, and the heavenly chorus rang over the hills of Bethlehem with hosannas to the newborn King. The humble shepherds believed Him, received Him, and worshiped Him. But the very ones who ought to have been the first to welcome Jesus did not discern Him. He was not the one their ambitious hopes desired. The false path they had entered, they continued to follow to the end. They became unteachable, self-righteous, and self-sufficient, fancying they possessed true light and that they were the only safe instructors of the people.

“The very same Satan is at work to undermine the faith of the people of God at this time. There are persons ready to catch up every new idea. **The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation are misinterpreted.** These persons do not consider that the truth has been set forth at the appointed time by the very men whom God was leading to do this special work.

“These men followed on step by step in the very fulfillment of prophecy, and those who have not had a personal experience in this work are to take the Word of God and believe on ‘their word’ who have been led by the Lord in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. These messages, received and acted upon, are doing their work to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God. **If we search the Scriptures to confirm the truth God has given His servants for the world, we shall be found proclaiming the first, second, and third angels’ messages.**

“It is true that there are prophecies yet to be fulfilled. But very erroneous work has been done again and again, and will continue to be done by those who seek to find new light in the prophecies, and who begin by turning away from the light that God has already given.

“The messages of Revelation 14 are those by which the world is to be tested; they are the everlasting gospel, and are to be sounded everywhere. But the Lord does not lay upon those who have not had an experience in His work the burden of making **a new exposition of those prophecies which He has, by His Holy Spirit, moved upon His chosen servants to explain.**

“According to the light God has given me, this is the work which you, Brother John Bell, have been attempting to do. Your views have found favor with some; but it is because these persons have not discernment to see the true bearing of the arguments you present. They have had but a limited experience in the work of God for this time, and they do not see where your views would lead them, and you do not see yourself where they would lead. They are ready to assent to your statements; they see nothing in them but that which is correct. But they are misled because you have woven together much Scripture in constructing your theory. Your arguments appear conclusive to them.

“Not so, however, with those who have an experimental knowledge of the truth that applies in the last period of this earth’s history. While they see that you hold some precious truth, they see also that you have misapplied Scripture, placing it in a framework of error where it does not belong, and making it give force to what which is not present truth. Because some accept that which you have written, do not become elated. It is most trying to your brethren who have confidence in you as a Christian and who love you as such, to state to you that the network of argument, which you have thought of so great consequence is not the theory of truth that God has given His people to proclaim for this time.

“The light God has given me is that the Scriptures you have woven together you yourself do not fully understand. If you did, you would discern that your theories tear up the very **foundation** of our faith. My brother, I have had many testimonies to correct those who have started out in the same way you are now traveling. These persons seemed sure that they were led by God, and they have come with their different theories to ministers who were preaching the truth. I said to these ministers, ‘The Lord is not in this; be not deceived, neither take the responsibility of deceiving others.’ At camp meetings I have had to speak plainly in regard to those who were thus leading away from right paths. With pen and voice I have borne the message, ‘Go not ye after them.’

“The hardest task I ever had to do in this line was in dealing with one who, I knew, wanted to follow the Lord. For some time he had thought he was obtaining new light. He was very ill, and must soon die. And oh, how my heart hoped he would not make it necessary for me to tell him just what he was doing. Those to whom he presented his views listened to him eagerly, and some thought him inspired. He had a chart made, and reasoned from the Scriptures to show that the Lord would come at a certain date, in 1894, I think. To many his reasoning seemed to be without a flaw. They told of his powerful exhortations in his sickroom. Most wonderful views passed before him. But what was the source of his inspiration? It was the morphine given him to relieve his pain.

“At our camp meeting at Lansing, Michigan, just before I came to Australia, I had to speak plainly in regard to this new light. I told the people that the words they had heard were not the truth of inspiration. The wonderful light, which presented such a show of truth, was the result of a misapplication of Scripture. The Lord’s work would not close up in 1894. The word of the Lord to me was, ‘This is not truth, but will lead into strange paths, and some will become confused over this representation, and will give up the faith.’

“Other persons have written to me of most flattering views which had been presented to them, and some have had them put in print. A new life has seemed to stir them; they are full of zeal. But the word comes to me as it has come to me in regard to the theories you hold: ‘Believe them not.’ You have a mixture of truth and error, so combined that you think it all genuine. **Here is where the Jews stumbled.** They wove a fabric that appeared to them a beautiful thing, but it led them to refuse the light Christ brought to them. They thought they had great light, and in that light they walked, and rejected the pure, true light which Christ had come to give. Intensity is taking possession of minds, urging them into different ventures, which lead them they know not where.

“No one has a true message fixing the time when Christ is to come or not to come. Be assured that **God gives no one authority to say that Christ delays His coming five years, ten years, or twenty years.** ‘Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh’ [Matthew 24:44]. This is our message, the very message that the three angels flying in the midst of heaven are proclaiming. The work to be done now is that of sounding this last message of mercy to a fallen world. **A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God’s people. But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.**

“The work will grow deeper and become more earnest to the very close of time. And all who are laborers together with God will contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They will not be turned from the present message, which is already lightening the earth with its glory. Nothing is worth contending for but the glory of God. The only rock that will stand is the Rock of Ages. The truth as it is in Jesus is the refuge in these days of error.

“God has warned His people of the perils before them. John beholds the things which will be in the last days, and he sees a people working counter to God. Read Revelation 12:17; 14:10–13, and chapters 17 and 13. John sees the company who have been deceived. He says, ‘I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame’ [Revelation 16: 13–15].

“From those who have rejected truth, the light of God has departed. They did not heed the message of the True Witness, ‘I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see’ [Revelation 3:18]. But that message will do its work, and a people will be prepared to stand without fault before God.

“John beheld this company, and he says, ‘Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints’ [Revelation 19:7, 8].

“Prophecy has been fulfilling, **line upon line. The more firmly we stand under the banner of the third angel’s message, the more clearly shall we understand the prophecy of Daniel; for the Revelation is the supplement of Daniel.** The more fully we accept the light presented by the Holy Spirit through the consecrated servants of God, the deeper and surer, even as the eternal throne, will appear **the truths of ancient prophecy**; we shall be assured that men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. Men must themselves be under the influence of the Holy Spirit in order to understand the Spirit’s utterances through the prophets. **These messages were given, not for those that uttered the prophecies, but for us who are living amid the scenes of their fulfillment.**

“I would not feel that I could present these things, if the Lord had not given me this work to do. There are others besides yourself, and more than one or two, who like you think they have new light, and are all ready to present it to the people. But it would be pleasing to God for them to accept the light already given and walk in it, and base their faith upon the Scriptures, which sustain the positions held by the people of God for many years. The everlasting gospel is to be proclaimed by human agents. We are to sound the messages of the angels which are represented as flying in the midst of heaven, with the last warning to a fallen world. If we are not called upon to prophesy, **we are called to believe the prophecies**, and to cooperate with God in giving light to other minds. This we are trying to do.

“You can help us, my brother, in many ways. But I am commissioned of the Lord to say to you that you are not to be self-centered. Take heed how you **hear**, how you **understand**, and how you **appropriate** the Word of God. The Lord will bless you in drawing in even lines with your brethren. Those whom He has sent forth to proclaim the third angel’s message have been working in unison with the heavenly intelligences. The Lord does not lay upon you a burden to proclaim a message that will bring discord into the ranks of believers. I repeat, He is not leading anyone by His Holy Spirit to frame a theory that will unsettle faith in the solemn messages He has given His people to bear to our world.

“The Lord Jesus said to His disciples when He was with them, ‘I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.’ He could have made disclosures which would have absorbed the attention of the disciples and caused them to lose sight of His former instruction that He wished to be the subject of their most earnest thought. But He withheld those things which they would have been amazed to hear, and which would have afforded them opportunity to cavil, to create misunderstanding and disaffection. He would give no occasion for persons of little faith and piety to mystify and misrepresent the truth, and thus create factions.

“Jesus could have presented mysteries which would have given subject for thought and investigation for generations, even to the close of time. Himself the source of all true science, He could have led men to the investigation of mysteries, and age after age their minds would have been so thoroughly absorbed that they would have felt no desire to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God.

“Jesus well knew that **Satan is constantly working to excite curiosity, and busy men with conjecture.** Thus he seeks to eclipse the grand and momentous truth which Christ wished to be ever prominent before their minds. ‘For this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.’

“There is a lesson for us in those words of Christ spoken after the feeding of the five thousand. He said, ‘Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.’ These words meant more than that the disciples should gather the broken pieces of bread into baskets. **Jesus meant that they should mark His words, should study the Scriptures, and treasure every ray of light.** Instead of searching for a knowledge of something that God had not revealed, they were carefully to **gather up what He had given them.**

“Satan had tried to eclipse from human minds the knowledge of God, and to eradicate from their hearts the attributes of God. Man was seeking out many inventions, which he supposed that he himself had originated, and he thought himself wiser than God. That which God had revealed was misconstrued, misapplied, and mingled with satanic delusions. Satan will quote Scripture in order to deceive. He tried to deceive Christ in this way. So he still tries to deceive men. He will lead them to misconstrue the Scriptures, and make them testify to falsehood.

“Christ came to adjust truths that had been misplaced and made to serve the cause of error. **He recalled them, repeated them, placed them in their proper position in the framework of truth, and bade them stand fast forever.** Thus it was with the law of God, with the Sabbath, and with the marriage institution.

“We are to study His example. Satan seeks to obliterate everything that would keep the true God in remembrance; but the followers of Christ are to **treasure up what God has revealed. No truth of His Word, opened to them by His Spirit, is to be set aside.**

“Theories will be continually agitated to divert the mind, to unsettle the faith. **Those who have had the actual experience in the unfolding of the prophecies, have been made what they are today, Seventh-day Adventists, by these prophecies.** They are to stand with their loins girt about with truth, and with the whole armor on. Those who have not had this experience are privileged to hold the message of truth with the same confidence. **The light that God has been pleased to give His people will not weaken their confidence in the path in which He has led them in the past, but will strengthen them to hold fast the faith. We must hold the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.**

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus’ (Revelation 14:12). Here we stand, under the third angel’s message. ‘And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; 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 have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, 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. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities’ [Revelation 18:1–5].

“Thus the substance of the second angel’s message is again given to the world by that other angel who lightens the earth with his glory. These messages all blend in one, to come before the people in the closing days of this earth’s history. All the world will be tested, and all that have been in the darkness of error in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will understand the last message of mercy that is to be given to men.

“Our work is to proclaim the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. ‘**Prepare to meet thy God**’ [Amos 4:12], is the warning given to the world. It is a warning to us individually. We are called upon to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. There is a work for you, my brother, to do, to yoke up with Christ. Make sure that your building is on the rock. Do not risk eternity on a probability. You may not live to participate in the perilous scenes on which we are now entering. The life of no one of us is assured for any given time. Should you not watch every moment? Should you not closely examine your own self, and inquire, What will eternity be to me?

“The great burden of every soul should be, Is my heart renewed? Is my soul transformed? Are my sins pardoned through faith in Christ? Have I been born again? Am I complying with the invitation, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light’ [Matthew 11:28]. Do you count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus? And do you feel it your duty to believe every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God?” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 17, 6–23.

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