

# The Pillars of Our Faith

It seems that more and more churches are embracing ecumenism. I recently attended a church in another state. The speaker used a vision, in *Early Writings*, 78, to say that the central, and only, pillar of our faith is the death and resurrection of Christ. They said we are to major in the majors and minor in the minors. There was a call for unity and the outpouring of the Spirit. All who desired to unite would account the only pillar of our faith to be the death and resurrection of Christ. They would set aside minor differences; some were mentioned, including the health message and importance of Ellen White's writings. The heavenly Sanctuary was cast down; and, in its place was erected "a temple of truth." The whole church stood for the appeal; they stood hand in hand and prayed for the Holy Spirit. The speaker mentioned that, in this unity with the Holy Spirit, we could say things that nobody would reject. The unity of God is found in faith, not compromise; it is not with those who join hands and lightly esteem the Truth. Should this come as a surprise?

"There is an alarming indifference in regard to the doctrines which are the pillars of the Christian faith. The opinion is gaining ground, that, after all, these are not of vital importance. This degeneracy is strengthening the hands of the agents of Satan, so that false theories and fatal delusions which the faithful in ages past imperiled their lives to resist and expose are now regarded with favor by thousands who claim to be followers of Christ."—*1911 Great Controversy*, 46.

## The Pillars of Our Faith

"The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light which streams from the cross of Calvary, and in connection with the wondrous, central truth of the Saviour's atonement. Those who study the Redeemer's wonderful sacrifice grow in grace and knowledge."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 221.2.

While the central pillar of our faith is the sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin, this pillar is surrounded by, and includes, the other pillars

of our faith. In the *Early Writings'* vision, Ellen White describes the pillar as "immense." This is because "all other truths cluster" around this one. Our faith is not many individual doctrines but a systematic theology that is in harmony with itself. It stands together, or it will fall apart.

"The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the Sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels' messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary."—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 30-31.

Here we see a list of doctrines that came into open view from the time of 1844 and the subsequent disappointment. Now we ask, Are these pillars of Truth? Let us continue the quote:

"Now at the present time God designs a new and fresh impetus [something that influences an action to a quicker development] shall be given to His work. Satan sees this, and he is determined it shall be hindered. He knows that if he can deceive the people who claim to believe present truth [and make them believe that] the work the Lord designs to do for His people is a removing of the old landmarks, something which they should, with most determined zeal, resist, then he exults over the deception he has led them to believe. The work for this time has certainly been a surprising work of various hindrances, owing to the false setting of matters before the minds of many of our people. That which is food to the churches is regarded as dangerous, and should not be given them. And this slight difference of ideas is allowed to unsettle the faith, to cause apostasy, to break

up unity, to sow discord, all because they do not know what they are striving about themselves. Brethren, is it not best to be sensible? Heaven is looking upon us all, and what can they think of recent developments? While in this condition of things, building up barriers, we not only deprive ourselves of great light and precious advantages, but just now, when we so much need it, we place ourselves where light cannot be communicated from heaven that we ought to communicate to others.”—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 31; *1888 Materials*, 518-519.

This manuscript was written just after Jones and Waggoner presented the topic of righteousness by faith. It was rejected by the leadership and labeled as changing old landmarks. In response to this, Ellen White defined a good portion of landmarks to show that the message of righteousness by faith did not contradict any of them. To demonstrate that landmarks are the same as pillars, please note the following:

“For more than half a century the different points of present truth have been questioned and opposed. New theories have been advanced as truth, which were not truth, and the Spirit of God revealed their error. As the great pillars of our faith have been presented, the Holy Spirit has borne witness to them, and especially is this so regarding the truths of the Sanctuary question. Over and over again the Holy Spirit has in a marked manner endorsed the preaching of this doctrine. But today, as in the past, some will be led to form new theories and to deny the truths upon which the Spirit of God has placed His approval.”—*1 Sermon and Talks*, 386.2.

“Our faith in reference to the messages of the first, second, and third angels was correct. The great waymarks we have passed are immovable. Although the hosts of hell may try to tear them from their foundation and triumph in the thought that they have succeeded, yet they do not succeed. These pillars of truth stand firm as the eternal hills, unmoved by all the efforts of men combined with those of Satan and his host. We can learn much, and should be constantly searching the Scriptures to see if these things are so. God’s people are now to have their eyes fixed on the heavenly Sanctuary, where the final ministration of our great High Priest in the work of the judgment is going forward—where He is interceding for His people.”—*Evangelism*, 223.

“There are the main pillars of our faith, subjects which are of vital interest, the Sabbath, the keeping of the commandments of God.”—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 77.1.

“Those who seek to remove the old landmarks

are not holding fast; they are not remembering how they have received and heard. Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the pillars of our faith concerning the Sanctuary or concerning the personality of God or of Christ are working as blind men. They are seeking to bring in uncertainties and to set the people of God adrift without an anchor.”—*Ye Shall Receive Power (a devotional)*, 235.3.

Here are the pillars of our faith expounded on a little: the commandments of God (to be obeyed) and faith in Jesus as our High Priest in the heavenly Sanctuary—the cleansing of the Sanctuary, a time when a man must be afflicting his soul, confessing his sins, humbling his heart before God, and getting ready for the final conflict between Christ and Satan. Also involved here are the state of the churches that have refused this truth (Second Angel’s Message), the mark of the beast, enforced Sunday worship, the seal of God placed in the forehead, the Sabbath, the prophetic identifications of papal Rome, Protestant America and their work, and the health message (EGW places it as essential to the Third Angel’s Message):

“When the Third Angel’s Message is received in its fullness, health reform will be given its place in the councils of the conference, in the work of the church, in the home, at the table, and in all the household arrangements. Then the right arm will serve and protect the body.”—*6 Testimonies*, 327.2.

The state of the dead, the Second Coming of Christ, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the personality of the Godhead (that there are three distinct beings who are eternal, omnipotent, and self-existent, and these three are one)—these are the pillars of our faith.

“I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps—the first, second, and third angels’ messages. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.’ I was again brought down through these messages and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform.”—*Early Writings*, 258-259.

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These pillars of our faith are the weighty matters that must be upheld. They are the doctrines we cannot exchange for peace. It should be noticed that these are the very doctrines that set us apart from other denominations, that make our message harder to accept. Of all these doctrines, the one that Satan hates the most is the doctrine of a heavenly Sanctuary. This doctrine opens our eyes to the testing truths for our time; it reveals, to us, an unbroken system of truth:

“The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly Sanctuary is the foundation of our faith.”—*Counsels to the Church*, 347.1.

We are warned:

“In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no Sanctuary. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?”—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 53.

While this was partially fulfilled by Desmond Ford, I am sure that Satan has not given up. We are to be ever growing, ever reaching for more light upon these subjects. There are those who seek to bring in “new light.” This new light consists of rejecting or reducing the amount and importance of the pillars of our faith. Woe to them; for they are calling darkness light and light darkness. These should be resisted at the cost of unity, but in the spirit of love.

“If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference, and even war.”—*1911 Great Controversy*, 45.

As truth seekers, we should not be Pharisaical or bigoted (intolerantly prejudiced against different beliefs and groups of people). We should be earnest, testing everything by the Word of God. God will never allow those who love the truth to be led astray.

“We must not think, ‘Well, we have all the truth; we understand the main pillars of our faith, and we may rest on this knowledge.’ The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light. A brother asked, ‘Sister White, do you think we must understand the truth for ourselves? Why can we not take the truths that others have gathered together and believe them because they have investigated the subjects, and then we shall be free to go on

without the taxing of the powers of the mind in the investigation of all these subjects? Do you not think that these men who have brought out the truth in the past were inspired of God?’

“I dare not say they were not led of God, for Christ leads into all truth; but when it comes to inspiration in the fullest sense of the word, I answer, No. I believe that God has given them a work to do, but if they are not fully consecrated to God at all times, they will weave self and their peculiar traits of character into what they are doing, and will put their mold upon the work, and fashion men in religious experience after their own pattern. It is dangerous for us to make flesh our arm. We should lean upon the arm of Infinite Power. God has been revealing this to us for years. We must have living faith in our hearts and reach out for larger knowledge and more advanced light.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 25, 1890, par. 4.

The Sanctuary message gives us the heavenly pattern; it protects us from false religion and false paths. The commandments of God show us the standard we are to meet when Christ returns. Aaron’s rod (confirming Aaron’s authority as the first high priest of Israel) warns us against rejecting the ministration of our great High Priest and the importance of accepting Him as our leader; Moses had it placed inside the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place of Israel’s Temple. The rod also points us to the state of the dead. It is an archetype (a recurrent symbol) of death and rebirth. We know not what we will be when Christ returns. When God gave the staff life again it was in every state of an almond trees life at the same time. Satan will work most powerfully through spiritualism in these last days. The bowl of manna, also placed inside the Ark of the Covenant, is a reminder to future generations of His day-by-day goodness and provisions for our future needs. During difficulties we can trust that we will be provided for. We will be given the words we need when we stand before kings. It also teaches the importance of the health message:

“Many make the subject of temperance a matter of jest. They claim that the Lord does not concern Himself with such minor matters as our eating and drinking. But if the Lord had no care for these things, He would not have revealed Himself to the wife of Manoah, giving her definite instructions and twice enjoining upon her to beware lest she disregard them. Is not this sufficient evidence that He does care for these things?”—*Child Guidance*, 407.2.

We should make the pillars of our faith the center of our study and speech. We should not

take another's word for it; we need to have a living experience in the things of God. We need to be able to answer for our faith. Let us seek, with earnest prayer, for more light on these topics. Let us work out our salvation with fear and trembling; for Revelation 10 shows us that God's hand directed the Adventist faith.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."—Hebrews 2:1.

"The religion of Jesus is endangered. It is being mingled with worldliness. Worldly policy is taking the place of the true piety and wisdom that comes from above, and God will remove His prospering hand from the conference. Shall the ark of the covenant be removed from this people? Shall idols be smuggled in? Shall false principles and false precepts be brought into the Sanctuary? Shall antichrist be respected? Shall the true doctrines and principles given us by God, which have made us what we are, be ignored? Shall God's instrumentality, the publishing house, become a mere political, worldly institution? This is directly where the enemy, through blinded, unconsecrated men, is leading us."—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 95-96.

The prevailing apostasy, the lax attitude regarding our pillars of faith, and the "new light" that is really darkness—these are all evidences that Christ is closer now than when we first believed. Let's hold fast our confidence in the message; we have not followed cunningly devised fables. We know the power of God unto salvation. Let us study to know what is Truth. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but encourage one another and pray for one another. Do not surrender a pillar of our faith for the pretense of unity.

"Let small companies assemble in the evening, at noon, or in the early morning to study the Bible. Let them have a season of prayer, that they may be strengthened, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This work Christ wants to have done in the heart of every worker. If you yourselves will open the door to receive it, a great blessing will come to you. Angels of God will be in your assembly. You will feed upon the leaves of the tree of life. What testimonies you may bear of the loving acquaintance made with your fellow workers in these precious seasons when seeking the blessing of God. Let each tell his experience in simple words. This will bring more comfort and joy to the soul than all the pleasant instruments of music that could be brought into the churches. Christ will come into your hearts. It is by this means only that you can

maintain your integrity."—*7 Testimonies for the Church*, 195.

## The Biblical Foundation

The book of Hebrews outlines, for us, the foundation that Christ has laid. Each of us should have a practical experience in it and be able to teach it.

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."—Hebrews 6:1-2.

## Repentance from Dead Works

What is repentance from dead works all about? In Hebrews 9:11-14, Paul speaks of these dead works. He outlines how Christ has been inaugurated in the heavenly Sanctuary to minister in our behalf. The blood of animals cannot cleanse the conscience, but the blood of Christ can.

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"—Hebrews 9:14.

This statement is most certainly about sin. Christ can cleanse our conscience from sin; whereas the blood of an animal cannot. He can do this because He was anointed a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, having offered a more excellent sacrifice. If we cooperate with Him, He will help us clean up our lives. There is strong evidence that the dead works Paul is speaking about are also a reference to the sacrificial services; we are freed from dead works to serve the living God, Jesus Christ, through spiritual, living sacrifices instead of slaying animals. Hebrews shows the ineffectiveness and uselessness of continuing the sacrificial services after type has met antitype (Jesus on the Cross is the antitype [the real thing] of the type [the symbol in Israel's Temple]). It was written to point to those whose hearts condemned them for ceasing sacrifices to Christ and because the earthly Temple would soon be destroyed.

Hebrews points its readers to the true temple in heaven. The spirit of Hebrews reminds us of Cain and Abel. Paul is calling his brethren to offer the sacrifice of faith; but, just like Cain, the response of those who trusted in works was to try to kill him. The unbelieving Jews hated Paul. Repentance from dead works highlights the failure and completely useless method of working our way to heaven. The sacrifice now to be offered is ourselves. The situation is reversed, and we are called

# The Pillars of Our Faith

to sacrifice ourselves as our Lord Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself. We are not saved because we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice; we are saved by faith in Jesus. The lamb that Abel offered had no power in itself to give Abel salvation. He was saved because of the promise of God. Similarly, when we crucify self and repent from our sins by obedience, this is not the saving force. There are those who believe that obeying the law will place them in heaven. The law can never save you:

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”—Romans 3:20.

The law can condemn, but it cannot justify. Similarly, the sacrifice of a lamb could not save someone who did not place their faith in the promise of a coming Messiah. The subtle difference between trusting in Christ and trusting in the Ten Commandments is less subtle in practice. Those who trust in the law become exceedingly pharisaical; they trust in themselves, that they are righteous. This is shown in firm indifference to “sinners” and an accusatory, faultfinding spirit. These people are horribly deceived. Obedience to the law is not manifest through inaction:

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”—Matthew 7:12.

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”—Matthew 22:36-40.

Those who trust in the law fall short of its principle. Those who trust in Christ are imparted righteousness; these fulfill the law through more than ceasing from sin. They do unto others what they want done to them. If we would have any hope of salvation, we must surrender the thought that we can save ourselves through action (works of love) or inaction (ceasing from sin). We have a merciful Saviour who has done all that God

requires for us. God does not have an evil eye to require more than what has been paid. Righteousness is by faith in Christ.

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”—Romans 3:21-24.

Sister White has this to say about repentance from dead works:

“Justification means the saving of a soul from perdition [utter destruction of a soul in hell after the judgment of God], that he may obtain sanctification, and through sanctification, the life of heaven. Justification means that the conscience, purged from dead works, is placed where it can receive the blessings of sanctification.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 908, par. 15.

There can be no hope of sanctification without justification. Justification prepares the heart to receive sanctification. If our consciences are not purged from our dead works, we have no space to receive the thoughts and actions of God. We want to be full of Christ, but not full of self.

## Faith toward God

The Bible tells us that faith brings obedience (Romans 16:26). The gospel has been revealed to the world for the purpose of inspiring us with the obedience of faith. No man can claim faith if he has no works.

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”—James 2:20.

There are many vain people who suppose that godliness consists of words and inaction. They boast that heaven is their home, but they are clouds without rain; they are sons of the devil. God has given us His Ten Commandments. He identifies them as righteousness:

“My tongue shall speak of Thy Word: for all Thy commandments are righteousness.”—Psalm 119:172.

All who are justified by faith will also receive

the imparted righteousness of Christ by faith. They will be obedient, not because obedience saves them; it is evidence of salvation, evidence that God is fulfilling His covenant and writing His law upon their hearts. God is faithful and just to forgive us (justification) and cleanse us (sanctification). The works that faith brings about are the true fulfilling of the commandments. Every child of God will replace wicked works with something better, works of love. They will keep their garments spotless, and visit the widows and the fatherless. Isaiah 58 shows us what it really means to fulfill the law.

“The Lord Jesus seeks the co-operation of those who will become unobstructed channels for the communication of His grace. The first thing to be learned by all who would become workers together with God is the lesson of self-distrust; then they are prepared to have imparted to them the character of Christ. This is not to be gained through education in the most scientific schools. It is the fruit of wisdom that is obtained from the divine Teacher alone.”—*Desire of Ages*, 249-250.

### **The Doctrine of Baptism**

For the sake of space, I have already discussed this in a previous newsletter. It consists of the laver experience in the earthly sanctuary, which is symbolic of the physical baptism and the ordinance of foot washing. This highlights the importance of commitment to God through baptism by immersion and humble service to one another through foot washing. Both of these are symbolic of a continual experience. Additionally, baptism typifies marriage to Christ, and foot washing should be viewed as a pledge to serve the Bride of Christ. No member of the church should think that they are the queen to be served by the servants.

### **The Laying on of Hands**

The laying on of hands most significantly speaks of the reception of the Holy Spirit:

“And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.”—Acts 8:18.

This is not the only purpose of the laying on of hands. We also understand that the Holy Spirit brings with it some form of gift:

“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery [council of the church elders].”—1 Timothy 4:14.

These spiritual gifts can be found in 1 Corinthians 12:8-12. When the church had divisions in

it, leadership was chosen based upon specified criteria; they were set apart and then ordained to the position through the laying on of hands.

“Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.”—Acts 6:6.

Therefore we may conclude that the foundation of faith includes the reception of the Holy Spirit and the organization of a body of believers through selecting leaders by qualities and ordaining them through the laying on of hands. This process is understood as an indispensable foundation. How odd it is that some refuse such organization and its methods of achieving it. There are even some who blaspheme the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead. In so doing, they distrust the good gift that our loving heavenly Father has promised and basely accuse Him of giving them a serpent. Christ, the faithful witness to the Laodicean church accurately states our condition; we are far from the source, far from the true foundation. Our church structure stands upon a foundation of sand; leadership is selected based upon academic achievements. God will not have it thus. There will be a change. God has given us this pillar as an absolutely essential means to protect the flock from false shepherds:

“I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, ‘The church must flee to God’s Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.’ This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith. I saw that, in the apostles’ day, the church was in danger of being deceived and imposed upon by false teachers. Therefore the brethren chose men who had given good evidence that they were capable of ruling well their own house and preserving order in their own families, and who could enlighten those who were in darkness. Inquiry was made of God concerning these; and then, according to the mind of the church and the Holy Ghost, they were set apart by the laying on of hands. Having received their commission from God and having the approbation [official approval] of the church, they went forth baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and administering the ordinances of the Lord’s house, often waiting upon the saints by presenting them the emblems of the broken body and spilt blood of the crucified Saviour, to keep fresh in the memory of God’s beloved

children His sufferings and death.

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“I saw that we are no more secure from false teachers now than they were in the apostles’ days; and, if we do no more, we should take as special measures as they did to secure the peace, harmony, and union of the flock. We have their example, and should follow it. Brethren of experience and of sound minds should assemble, and following the Word of God and the sanction of the Holy Spirit, should, with fervent prayer, lay hands upon those who have given full proof that they have received their commission of God, and set them apart to devote themselves entirely to His work. This act would show the sanction of the church to their going forth as messengers to carry the most solemn message ever given to men.

“God will not entrust the care of His precious flock to men whose mind and judgment have been weakened by former errors that they have cherished, such as so-called perfectionism and spiritualism, and who, by their course while in these errors, have disgraced themselves and brought reproach upon the cause of truth. Although they may now feel free from error and competent to go forth and to teach this last message, God will not accept them. He will not entrust precious souls to their care; for their judgment was perverted while in error, and is now weakened.”—*Early Writings, 100-102.*

## The Resurrection from the Dead

The Bible teaches us that the dead know nothing:

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in any thing that is done under the sun.”—*Ecclesiastes 9:5-6.*

We are told that the resurrection takes place at the Second Coming of Jesus:

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”—1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”—1 Corinthians 15:52.

The sounding of this trumpet could be considered the seventh trumpet of Revelation, when

Christ comes as a conqueror, followed by the armies of heaven. Ellen White describes this scene in dramatic detail: **7**

“His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, ‘Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?’ Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: ‘Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you.’ At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth.

“Then Jesus’ silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven and cried, ‘Awake! awake! awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise.’ Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, ‘Alleluia!’ as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death; and, in the same moment, we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.”—*Early Writings, 16.*

Paul places the resurrection from the dead as the fulfillment of his hope and, by extension, every Christian’s hope:

Philippians 3:8-9: “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

Philippians 3:10-11: “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”

Peter points us to the resurrection as a living hope:

1 Peter 1:3-4: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, re-

served in heaven for you.”

And John points us to two resurrections. The resurrection of the just takes place before the 1,000 years. It is the resurrection to eternal life:

Revelation 20:5: “This is the first resurrection.”

Revelation 20:6: “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

The second resurrection is the resurrection of the wicked.

Revelation 20:5: “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.”

John 5:28-29: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

### The Eternal Judgment

The fact that a judgment takes place is undeniable. Paul pointed Felix to it:

“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”—Acts 24:25.

Christ spoke many parables about the judgment, both before and after He comes the second time—the sheep and the goats, the ten virgins, the parable of the talents, and the wheat and the tares.

Daniel 8: 14 tells us exactly when this investigative judgment begins. Some believe that Jesus blotted the sins of the world out upon the cross. The apostles did not believe this:

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”—Acts 3:19. \*KJV is the only accurate translation of Acts 3:19 that I have found\*

Luke is here pointing to the refreshing latter rain as the time when sins would be blotted out. The former rain had just fallen. The Sanctuary teaches the same idea through the Day of Atonement. Since the conclusion of the 2300 days on October 22, 1844, Christ has been ministering in

the most holy place of the Sanctuary. He has been working to blot out every sin that the righteous have confessed and forsaken. The First Angel’s Message declares that we ought to fear and glorify God ‘for the hour of His judgment is come’ (Revelation 14:7). As our great High Priest cleanses the Sanctuary in heaven, we are to be working in harmony with Him, cleansing the Sanctuary of our bodies from sin.

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”—1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

When Jesus finishes His great work of atonement, He will come in the clouds of heaven. He says:

“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 16:15.

*\*A 16 page newsletter about the investigative judgment will be released soon\**

### Conclusion

The truths contained in the brief verses of Hebrews 6:1-2 are broad and far reaching. The Bible has much to say on these topics, and I encourage each of you to study them and make them the foundation of your faith. That when the storms of life and every wind of false doctrine are rushing upon the world, you may be accounted worthy to stand. Have your feet been firmly planted on the Rock, Jesus Christ? Live the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, finding shelter under His wings of mercy.

*For a finished work*



**Jonathan Taylor**

*Wisdom is justified of all her children. -Luke 7:35*

*More Food for the Little Flock —*