

Glimpses of the Remnant Church

#0914

Study given by W.D. Frazee—February 9, 1962

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” Revelation 12:17.

I want to study with you three glimpses of the remnant church—three pictures of God’s people in these closing hours—before the sifting, during the sifting, and *after* the sifting. I’ll study the last one first and the first one last. You’ll see the reason why as we proceed.

Now this 12th chapter and 17th verse, while it, in a sense, is a picture of God’s people throughout the last generation, this verse is especially focused upon the church when its members fully reflect the image of Jesus. You can see that because it says that the remnant here described keep what? [Audience responds: The commandments.] They keep the commandments of God. And that this is a point to be emphasized is brought out when we turn to Revelation 14:12. You can say that with me too:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus”
Revelation 14:12.

Now, what are the three words here that are just the same as Revelation 12:17?
“Keep the commandments.”

I want to ask you something. If God says His people keep the commandments, will they be keeping them? Yes. God told us not to bear false witness, and He won’t do what He told *us* not to do, will He? No. He’s “the faithful and true witness,” the message to the Laodiceans says (see Revelation 3:14). So when Christ bears witness that His people on earth are keeping the commandments, you may be sure that they’re keeping them.

That, of course, leads us into an interesting thought and we could spend the entire hour on that point. The question is, Will this ever happen? Will God’s people ever really keep the commandments, or will they have to always be shielded and covered by the merits of Jesus making up for their failure to keep the commandments?

You and I know that the purpose of the third angel’s message is the development of a people who can and do really keep the commandments of God—not in their own righteousness, of course. The faith of Jesus which enabled Him, in human flesh, to

keep His Father's commandments (John 15:10), that same faith, as it comes to its full fruition in the remnant, will enable *them* to keep the commandments of God (Revelation 14:12).

And you may be sure that Satan is going to do everything he can to prevent the development of that people and to prevent the demonstration here on earth because the whole issue of the great controversy is over this question of whether the law of God can be kept or not. Thank God, the remnant will give the lie to Satan, will vindicate the character of God, and will reveal here on earth a righteous character. Throughout the time of trouble they will stand without a mediator. And they will stand; they'll not fall. They'll stand; they'll not draw back. They will, to all the on-looking universe, reveal the righteousness of Jesus actually lived out in these mortal bodies. I want a part in that, don't you, friends?

In Isaiah 4, we are given a view of the church at that time. Isaiah 4:3-4:

“And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning” Isaiah 4:3-4.

Then follows the wonderful picture of God's protecting care over His people during the time of trouble in verses 5 and 6.

The thing I want you to notice in these verses is that there is coming a time, according to this scripture, when *everyone* that is written among the living in Jerusalem will be called holy. What does Jerusalem stand for? The church. Then is there coming a time when the holy will be holy still? And where will they be? They'll be in Jerusalem. Let no one confuse the mind on that point. They will be in Jerusalem, in Zion. They will be the remnant people of God.

What will have happened to the disloyal, the sinful, the worldly? Why, you can see, friends, they have been sifted out. They have been purged out. And so:

“...He that is left in Zion and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem” Isaiah 4:3.

I hope we get the full import of that. When the church appears finally in her beautiful white robes, the holy will be within and the unholy will be without. The righteous will be inside and the unrighteous will be outside. Oh, I'm so glad that God is going to come off triumphantly, God and His church, aren't you?

Speaking of the church when the terrible sifting has done its work, Volume 5, page 81, says:

“The deeper the night for God’s people the more brilliant the stars. Satan will sorely harass the faithful; but in the name of Jesus they will come off more than conquerors. Then will the church of Christ appear ‘fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners’” *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 5, page 81.

How is she going to appear? Beautiful? Fair? Clear? Oh, yes, victorious. That’s the picture of the church *after* the sifting.

Now let us look at the church *during* the sifting. If the church comes through the sifting with the loyal remaining *in* the church and the disloyal outside of it, we would naturally expect that during the sifting a separation will take place, and that that separation will consist in the removal of the disloyal while the loyal remain.

We see this picture vividly brought to view in Matthew, the 3rd chapter, the 12th verse. John the Baptist is speaking here of Jesus the Messiah:

“...He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” Matthew 3:11-12.

Now, what is Jesus going to do? He’s going to purge His floor. What is the floor? The floor is the church. What’s He going to do to the chaff? Well, He’s going to blow it out and burn it up. What will happen to the wheat? It will remain. Notice how this verse is applied to the coming sifting within the church. Volume 5, page 80-81:

“But the days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor” *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 5, page 80.

So you see how the text in Matthew is applied to the days of the purification of the church. Now, we’re not left in doubt as to *when* that time is. The next page:

“The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to

yield to the powers that be rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. ...In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church" *Ibid.*, page 81.

In what time? Why, this time of the mark of the beast, this time when the great mark of apostasy will be embraced by the union of church and state here in this country, when the image of the beast is set up, when the fires of persecution are rekindled. Then it says:

"Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. ...In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church" *Ibid.*

What is the fan, then, in the Master's hand that blows the wind through the church? The fan is persecution. "Oh," we say, "would the Lord use persecution?" He has, again and again. It's true that the Devil is the one who inspires it, but even the wrath of man praises God, and any wrath that won't praise Him, He does what with? Restrains it. God will never allow persecution to come upon His church unless He, the Lord, sees in it some benefit for His church. And God is going to use that hot, angry breath that streams forth from the dragon's mouth to blow through His church and blow out the chaff. That's why He's going to allow that, and that is what will sift the church.

And so during the sifting, we see the church under the pressure of what? Persecution. During the sifting we see a great contest in the world at large, in Christendom, over the commandments of God versus the commandments of men.

Thank God, even though some are going out from this movement, there'll be some coming in from all these other bodies. They will come as the true sheep hearing the true Shepherd's voice. Won't it be a wonderful ingathering, friends? That's the time of the mighty loud cry.

Now it's a sad thing that the very pressures, the very crisis, which cause many to come in from outside will cause some to faint by the way and give up their profession of faith.

We are given a picture of the severity of the sifting in Volume 5, page 136. I read:

"Soon God's people will be tested by fiery trials, and the great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be base metal" *Ibid.*, page 136.

The great proportion of those who now appear to be genuine and true will prove to be what? Base metal. Changing the figure, they're chaff, not wheat. And when the test is brought, their real character will be revealed. And so, at this time, they abandon the church.

Down near the bottom of the page it says:

"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" *Ibid*.

The whole page shows that it's talking about the issue over the National Sunday Law when our nation is on the side of the great rebel leader. What are the majority of God's professed people going to do in that crisis hour? Forsake us. But notice, friends, they forsake *us*. They forsake the *church*. They forsake the *Sabbath*. They forsake God's *message*. They abandon their position.

As *Great Controversy*, page 608, vividly describes it:

"As the storm approaches a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition" *Great Controversy*, page 608.

There's some fuzzy thinking on this. I hear it expressed at times. The question is raised, "Well, maybe they're going to continue to keep the Sabbath. Maybe they're going to continue to profess to be Seventh-day Adventists." This says very clearly that they *abandon* their position and *join* the ranks of the opposition.

Let me tell you, friends, when all the pressure of church and state (and by church I mean the worldly church—the papacy and the so-called Protestants uniting), when all that pressure of church and state is focused on God's commandment-keeping people, it'll take something more than mere profession to stay by the church, the true church. Yes, it will. The opposition is going to be so terrific, so tremendous, that every false-hearted professor will be revealed. He'll abandon his position. Don't forget it, friends. Don't get on that point.

Volume 6, page 400-401: this shows they're going out in various ways, but they're going out:

"As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. Some who are now ready to take up weapons of warfare will in times of real peril make it manifest that they have not built upon the solid rock; they will yield to temptation" *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 6, page 400.

Now notice, some people that are ready to fight for the truth today, when the real crisis comes, are going to yield. Do you remember a man that said he was ready to go with Jesus to prison and to death, and even if everybody else forsook the Master, he wouldn't? Who was that? [Audience responds: Peter.] Peter. Did he lead the fight in favor of Jesus? Yes, he did. He got out his sword and started to fight for Jesus. But a little later, after leading the fight, he led the *flight*. You remember that, don't you? He it was that led the rest of the disciples in abandoning Jesus in the crisis hour. That's going to be repeated down here today:

"Some who are now ready to take up weapons of warfare will in times of real peril make it manifest that they have not built upon the solid rock; they will yield to temptation. Those who have had great light and precious privileges, but have not improved them will, under one pretext or another, go out from us" *Ibid.*

Now notice, they'll have a pretext. Some will have one reason, some another. Did Peter have a reason that night for leaving the Master? He thought so. Everybody that goes out, they'll have some alibi, some excuse. But the point is they'll go out. Why? They haven't built on the solid Rock.

I read on:

"Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy..." *Ibid.*, page 401.

Oh, Brother and Sister, do you love the truth? Do you love the Sabbath? Do you love the reforms? Do you love the church? Do you love God's program? It isn't just a matter of doing it, or tolerating it, putting up with it. Do you *love* it? Oh, if you don't, ask God every day that He'll give you a *love* for His truth, His message, His church, His reforms, His standards, because only those who *love* these things are going to cling to them when all the world is blowing at them with all the fury of the dragon.

"Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy; they will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils..." *Ibid.*

You see, not only will there be the force of persecution against the church, there will be doctrines of devils and mighty miracle working power calling people out of the true church into the great apostasy. When you've got persecution coming from one side, *pushing*, and deception and miracles from the other side, *pulling*, it's going to take something to stand, isn't it, friends? Yes, it will. But God's remnant will *stand*. They'll remain. And they stand all through that shaking, sifting period.

Now, as I've mentioned, not only are many going out but many are coming in. This goes on and says:

“But, on the other hand, when the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd’s voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd” *Ibid*.

Isn’t that encouraging, friends? Praise God. Let’s never quit working and praying for souls. If they don’t yield today, perhaps they will tomorrow. Souls are precious.

Let’s take another view of the church during this sifting period. You’ll find it in Book 2 of *Selected Messages*, page 380. Notice the timing of it is made very clear:

“And all who will not bow to the decree of the national councils and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin...will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast”
Selected Messages, Book 2, page 380.

So the timing is clear. It’s when the image is set up. It’s when the national government joins with the apostate churches to enforce the false Sabbath. That’s the time of the sifting.

Now, let me read the very next sentence:

“Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place” *Ibid*.

If you forget the other references on the sifting, be sure you get this one because this puts it all in just three or four lines.

The persecution on the one hand and deception on the other are going to make such a tremendous sifting that it may look as if the church is about to what? About to fall. But will it fall? No. It says it won’t fall. Do you believe that? Well, if you believe that, friends, you’ll stay right with it, won’t you? Why, sure.

You know, if this building were shaking and somebody says, “It’s an earthquake! This building is going to fall!”, if you believed it, what would you do? You’d run out. But suppose somebody said, “No, we have a message from God. This building will *not* fall”, what would you do? You’d stay right inside. Yes. It’s that simple.

“The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out...” *Ibid*.

What happens to the sinners in Zion? You know, there are those that would like to have us believe that the sinners are going to stay in the church and the true ones are going to be sifted out. Did you ever hear any ideas like that? Yes, that's being taught, that they'll either be *forced* out or that they'll *go* out. In fact, some think they ought to be going out right now.

How simple the truth of God is, friends, and how wonderfully God has walled us about with the instructions of the *Testimonies*. How foolish it is to be deceived by all these false ideas, to be blown about with these winds of doctrine. Let me read this again:

"The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place" *Ibid*.

Will it be a terrible ordeal, friends? Believe me, it will. Many are not looking for it in its severity the way it's going to sweep through, but it's coming. It *has* to come, this says. Why, yes. If the church is to appear, finally, in her lily white robes, free from all entanglement with the world, then the world-loving, disloyal class must be purged out. And God lets the persecution of the dragon and the deceptions of the dragon work together to push and pull every disloyal one out of the church. A remnant...

I am reading now again from page 380:

"The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy" *Ibid*.

Oh, isn't that nice? They've learned to walk the beautiful way. They've learned to live and to love the beautiful life. They keep right on that upward way while all around them people are falling away, falling off the path, some on one side, some the other, but they stick right to it and go right through with Jesus and His church. Let's do it, what do you say, friends? All right, now that's the church *during* the sifting.

We've seen the church *after* the sifting; now we've seen the church *during* the sifting. Now, we'll take a look at the church *before* the sifting. When's that? That's right now. How do we know? We haven't come to the National Sunday Law yet, have we? No. Movements are afoot to bring it about. It could come very quickly, but it hasn't come yet. When that comes, then we know we're going right into the sifting time. We're in the shaking time right now, getting ready for it, but the great sifting is ahead of us.

Now, I want to ask you, before I look at any reference, tell me: if the disloyal are purged out of the church *during* the sifting, where are they now? They're in the church. If the loyal remain in the church through the sifting, where are they now? They're in the church too, aren't they? The loyal and disloyal are in the church all mixed up together.

Could you take a piece of paper and write on one side all the loyal ones and on the other side all the disloyal ones? No, you can't do that. Who's the only one who knows that? [Audience responds: God.] God. That's right.

But there's more to it than that, friends. The loyal and disloyal are developing at the present time. Did you ever find anything disloyal in *your* heart? Do you think there's anything loyal there? Well, then in our hearts may be found the same mixture that there is in the church. Is that true? And before the church is sifted, *we* must be sifted. Before the church is sifted, we personally, individually, must be sifted. We've got to get rid of that chaff that's in our heads.

What a shame, friends, if that's so, to be putting more chaff in all the while. Any chaff gone into your head in the last week? Better get it out, friends. Ask God to blow it out. But if you sincerely pray, "Lord, blow the chaff out that I got last week," will you put some more in next week? What about it, friends?

Will what you look at with your eyes, listen to with your ears—will it be chaff or wheat? Will the magazines you read, the books you study, the literature you enjoy, the music you listen to—will it be chaff or wheat? Do you think you can ever make a wheat character with chaff material? Do you think so? Oh, no. Nobody could ever do that. The scripture says:

"...What is the chaff to the wheat?..." Jeremiah 23:28.

But now, I want to tell you something, friends. While you can't look around you in the church and decide who it is that's going to be sifted out when the sifting comes and who's going to stay in, God has said some things through the Spirit of Prophecy to enable you and me to find out which direction we're headed. I go back to Volume 5, page 81. This tells what those who go out in the sifting are doing right now, *before* the sifting:

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death"
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 81.

Who are the people that leave the church in the crisis hour? The ones that step by step yield to worldly demands and conform to worldly customs. They do it how? Step by step. How many steps at a time? Just one step. Think of it. The soul that finally, in the crisis hour, deserts the church, gives up the Sabbath, and joins the dragon and the beast and the false prophet in bitter persecution against the remnant church, the man that does that in that crisis hour, somewhere back along the line, perhaps this very night, makes a decision that involves just one step toward the world, just one step.

I ask you, friends, is it important then, the one step? Oh, that we might see that, because there is a *tremendous* pressure, not only in the world but among the professed people of God today, a great pressure to *conform*, to move along with everybody else.

And as I heard a friend of mind say awhile back, “The great deception today is that apostasy is not *too* bad, provided you take it slow enough.” It mustn’t go too fast. Just go slow. But, ah, that’s the deception of the Devil, friends. The Devil doesn’t care how slow you move because he knows that if you take *one* step down, that prepares the way for what? Just one step more.

Be honest with your soul, friend. Can you look back and see that you’re doing some things now that once your conscience wouldn’t allow you to do? But the influence of the world, outside the church or inside the church, has been such that you gradually—in diet or dress or music or reading or education or recreation or association, in any or all of those—have let down a little? Not as careful as you once were? Not as strict as you once were in doing *exactly* what the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy say?

Ah, my friends, will it do to say, “Oh, but I’m only doing what those around me are doing.” The majority of God’s professed people are going to do what when the crisis comes? They’re going to forsake the church. And that majority is now *within* the church, and they are step by step doing what? Yielding to worldly demands and conforming to worldly customs. Is that what we see around us? God pity us, my friends.

Thank God, He has not left His people without **witnesses**. From time to time you can read right there in the *Review and Herald* the earnest warnings of our leaders appealing to us to follow the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy and not look to what human beings do. From time to time at our camp meetings you hear one of the Lord’s messengers, the appointed leaders of His people, stand up and call us back to the standards of this denomination. So nobody is going to have any excuse when Jesus comes. Nobody is going to be able to say, “Well, Lord I didn’t know any better.” It’s written that truth is revealed now from one angle, now from another. God help us to live up to it. What do you say?

There’s a wonderful picture in Volume 1, page 187, of those that are going to be true in the crisis hour, the ones that get the latter rain and give the loud cry and remain with the church until translation day and are caught up to meet Jesus in the air. Here is the picture, Volume 1, page 187:

“God leads His people on, step by step” *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 1, page 187.

The other one shows that the Devil is leading people *down*, step by step. But God’s leading His people *up*, step by step. Heaven is not reached in a single bound, friends. No. Nobody comes from being like the world to being like Jesus just all in a second. We’re counted that way as we’re justified and give our hearts to God, but the actual experience of being transformed, that’s a long process.

“God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next” *Ibid*.

Isn't that a sad thing, friends? To see somebody embrace this point and this point and this point and this point, and then finally say, “No, I can't go any farther. It's too straight, too strict, too peculiar, too different, can't do that.” Oh, what a sad thing. But now watch:

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation” *Ibid*.

Now let's look at our three pictures. The third picture is the church *after* the sifting. How is it? Ah, beautiful and holy and righteous in the beauty of the Lord our God. Everyone that remains in Zion, holy. Persecuted? Yes. Despised? Yes. But loyal? Yes. Where are the disloyal ones? Outside, outside the camp.

Now the second picture: the church *during* the sifting. What is it that brings that sifting? The awful persecution coupled with the marvelous miracle working power of Satan. Under that sifting, what do the disloyal ones do? They abandon their position; join the ranks of the opposition. What do the loyal ones do? They remain. That's why they are called the remnant, friends. They remain.

Now this first view of the church—right now—the chaff and wheat are all mixed up together. Can you tell which is which? No. God only knows, though, friends, He has made it possible for everyone to decide whether he's going to be wheat or chaff. Those who finally prove themselves to be chaff reach that place, that position of leaving, they reach it by going how? Step by step. Which direction? Down, toward the world. But, on the other hand, those who will finally prove true are now, step by step, going how? Up, up, up, more like Jesus, less like the world, more like Jesus, less like the world. That's the picture.

Now, do you see, friends that what we've studied in these three pictures is true? And it is. We've read it from inspiration. Do you see that it becomes very important for you and me to take a step every day? In fact, friends, we *do* take a step every day. The question is which way we step. Everybody takes a step every day. Every one of us tonight is either up or down compared with what we were a week ago.

Do you want to know how to take steps fast? Let me tell you a little secret. You will find it in Volume 5, page 163. Here's the way to find out what step to take and get the power to do it:

“The Lord speaks; enter into your closet...” *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 5, page 163.

What's the closet? Well, it's a place of prayer, a secret place of prayer.

“...Enter into your closet, and in silence commune with your own heart; listen to the voice of truth and conscience. Nothing will give such clear views of self as secret prayer. He who seeth in secret and knoweth all things will enlighten your understanding and answer your petitions. Plain, simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you” *Ibid*.

There you have it. If you and I will go to God with our Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, and down on our knees say, “Lord, help me to know what's the next step you want me to take,” will He help us find it? Yes, He will. When He shows us, then He wants us to take it. And we should plead with Him for help to take it and take it right there on our knees. We ought to settle it.

Let me illustrate it. Suppose here's a man here tonight, he's got a package of cigarettes in his pocket. Do you suppose if that man would get down on his knees and ask God to help him to know what he ought to give up that God *might* point out that package of cigarettes and say, “Son, give it up”? Might God do that? God might do that. And what would be the thing for that man to do, right there on his knees? Say, “Lord, help me. I'm going to give it up right now. Give it up right now, go down and put it in the furnace (or some way dispose of that package of cigarettes) right now.” Is that right? Is that the way to do it?

Ah, friends, if you and I had heeded every call of the Spirit as promptly as that, where do you suppose we'd be tonight? Only the Master knows, friends. If all God's people had, we'd be in the glory land. Isn't it too bad to wait ten years between steps? Or even a year? Isn't it? Oh, that God might help us to *run* the way of His commands.

But now, I want to come back to this very practical thing. Where is it that this happens? In the closet, in the secret place of prayer.

Let me illustrate it by going to the dental office. Suppose you go to the dentist and the dentist says, “Well, my, you've got just a mass of decayed teeth. They've got to come out.” He says, “Probably, I'd better not take them out all at once. You couldn't stand it. But we'll take one or two out today and then you come back in a few days and I'll take another one out.” Now, if you really wanted to get fixed up, would you meet your appointment? Yes.

Is there anything that needs to come out of you and me, friends? Shall we meet the Doctor and let Him pull it out? That's the question. And how foolish it is to look around and say to the dentist, “Well, I see a lot of other people with rotten teeth. If they can keep theirs, I guess I can keep mine.” How foolish! Oh, that God might help us to get in earnest to clean up so we won't be ‘cleaned out’ a little later on.

I see a number of boys and girls here tonight. I want to tell you a little story, children. When I was about the age of some of you, the Lord began to give me an experience in what I'm studying with you right now. I used to take my *Steps to Christ* and the Bible and be alone with the Lord, and the Lord talked to me.

Now, I don't want you to get the idea that I was some little saint, for I wasn't. I made a lot of mistakes and did a lot of things I shouldn't have. I'm sorry; I wish I hadn't.

What I'm trying to tell you is that even a wayward boy with a lot of sinful tendencies, if he'll go to God and get down on his knees, God will begin to talk to him about some things. That's the point I want you to see, for God did it for *me*. God would bring things to my mind. Sometimes He used other people to do it. He will with you.

I remember a year or two after I was baptized, there was one of our evangelists who held a series of meetings in a tent. And I went to this and I enjoyed the meetings very, very much. Along with the Gospel lectures there were some medical lectures. There was a Loma Linda doctor that came and he gave health lectures. You know, it's interesting as I look back over those many years, there's only one thing he said that I remember. That's right, just one thing. He touched on an article of diet that I liked very much. He gave the reasons, both from science and the Spirit of Prophecy, why that wasn't the best. Now, he didn't know that I was listening. I was just a barefoot boy. But God applied that to my heart. You know, I had a battle with myself over that. But finally I said, "All right, Lord, if that's what You want, all right."

And you know what happened? Well, not long after that there was a picnic, a Sabbath School picnic. And with the other children and young people, why, I went. And I was having a wonderful time. And then I spied this article of diet, and it was going to be given away free. I was a poor boy. We could have all we wanted. Now, I'm not going to tell you what the article of diet was for that has nothing to do with what I'm studying. That isn't the point. It could have been any one of a dozen things.

My point is God had talked to my heart about that thing, friends, and nobody but the Lord and I knew about it. And do you know what I did that day, as I stood there and I thought about what to do? Somehow the dear Lord helped me to go over away from the picnic grounds behind some great big boulders. And I got over there on the hillside behind that big rock all by myself, and I knelt down and I asked the Lord to help me. Nobody knew anything about it except me and the Lord.

Thank God, I got help, friends. And I went on back to the picnic, and while about everybody else was eating this, God helped me not to do it. Now, that doesn't mean, friends, that I was holier than everybody else. That isn't the point at all. If God hadn't talked to their hearts about it, they might have been much further along in a hundred other things than I was. That isn't the thing. The thing is God had talked to my heart about something. And oh, I'm so glad that He helped me to get over there behind that rock and pray!

You know, years went by. I never saw that place again. But many years later after I was in the ministry, my travels took me on a return from the General Conference right past that place. As our car wound up the highway, that incident came back to my mind, and I looked over there in that grove of trees and saw those great big rocks, and I thanked God for something He did for me when I was just a boy.

Oh, I wish I had *a/ways* listened to Him, friends. I'm sorry for all the times I haven't. I could tell you some other experiences, but I mention that one, friends, because, as I see you dear children here, you boys and girls, anybody that's old enough to understand what I'm talking about, I say to you dear ones, you can have an experience all alone with God. Yes, you can.

But remember, you must be willing to be different. You must be willing to take a step that, as far as you know, other people aren't taking. You must be willing, if God shows you something in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy that He wants you to do and He impresses your heart with it as you kneel in prayer, you must be willing to do it even if John and Harry and Dick and Alice and Mary and Jenny don't pay any attention to it. *You* must pay attention to it.

How did Daniel get ready so he could tell the king's dream? Oh, in the first chapter of Daniel, we see him standing there on a point of diet. Do you remember? What were all those other Sabbath-keeping young people doing? They were going for the king's table. Yes, they were. They ate what the king ate and drank what the king drank. But there was one young man that purposed in his heart that he wouldn't do it. And three other men said, "All right, Daniel, if you're going to be true, we will be too." If Daniel had failed, they would have failed, too, we're told.

Oh, my dear young people, you have no idea how much is at stake in these simple things about what you eat, and the way you dress, the way you fix your hair, the kind of shoes you buy, the kind of music you play and listen to, the books you read and the literature you enjoy, and the parties you attend, and the recreation and the amusements that you enter into. Right here is the battlefield of the soul. Right here is the battlefield of the soul.

And if you wait for the whole mob to come along and sweep you into the right path, remember that many of the same crowd that sang "Hosanna!" on Sunday when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt, many of the same ones were in the mob that cried "Crucify Him!" on Friday morning. Do you remember that? Mass pressure in the end will only lead you downward. Even if for the moment it seems to carry you upward and onward on a wave of revival and enthusiasm, if that's all that's carrying you, remember that every wave that comes in goes out. Every wave that comes in goes out. Oh, that God may give you an experience that rivets your feet to the eternal Rock.

When you have an experience such as I've read about here, then don't stop there, friends. That's no place to stop. Oh, no! Go to God and have another one. Onward! Onward, my friends! Onward! Keep studying what's written in these books.

Keep fashioning your life more and more like the Pattern. Dare to be different for His sake.

Now, do I need to say, don't let anyone take license from this to think that the way to go to heaven is just to hunt up all the ways to be odd and peculiar and strange? That's just plain silly, friends. That's fanaticism. We're not talking about that at all. We're talking about doing what God has said. That's never fanatical, to do what God has said. That's faith.

May we bow our heads.

Our precious Lord, with all our hearts we thank Thee this evening hour that there is a dear Savior who gave His life that men and women and boys and girls might be redeemed. We thank Thee that the relationships between Him and each one are as close and personal and real as though that one were the only one in all the world.

Oh, I pray tonight that Thou wilt bless each one in Thy presence with the earnest conviction, the sweet assurance, that he can have an experience with God. Bless these boys and girls, and the youth and the older ones. And may there be born in each heart the desire, the determination, to go to God in the secret place of prayer and find out what God wants us to do.

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