

God's Last Message 10 of 12

#0245

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1958

Ephesians is a wonderful epistle that Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus. He looks down the stream of time to the very end, the coming of Jesus. Here is something in the fourth chapter that's for us today as well as back there:

“Wherefore He says, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” Ephesians 4:8.

Do you know that when Jesus went back to Heaven, he gave some gifts to men? Isn't that wonderful? If the one you love the best is gone away from home where you live for a while and had sent back some gifts, you'd want to be sure to look in the post office and get your package, wouldn't you? Yes. Well, when Jesus went back to Heaven, this says, He gave gifts unto men. Now let us see what those gifts are.

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers...”
Ephesians 4:11.

There they are these gifts of the Spirit; these great gifts through which Heaven has a message for men. And among them all, particularly this gift of prophecy is declared by the Bible to be the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 19:10). As we have studied, it is through this gift that the channel of light from Heaven to earth comes—through this gift of prophecy. Therefore, when you see a church with a prophet along with these other gifts, you see a church that is in the channel of light from Heaven to earth.

Now let us see what the purpose of these gifts is—the 12th verse: “for the perfecting of the saints.” Do you need to be made perfect? Well, here are gifts to make you perfect. Do you want to be made perfect? If you do, then you will place yourself under the channel of light. You will be looking heavenward to get every ray of light that Jesus has for you. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, that is a work of service—ministry to others. Do you want to give your life in service for others? Here are gifts that will prepare you for that—enable you—to do loving, efficient service for others. Oh, how blessed those are who sit under these rays of light, and then under that light, go forth to serve others.

Now notice especially, this is what I want to study with you: for the edifying of the body of Christ. That word, edify means to build up. We speak of a building sometimes as an edifice, and so to edify means to build up. Jesus wants to build up the body, His

body, for the edifying of the body of Christ. What is the body of Christ? Paul says of Jesus, that He is:

“... the head over all things to the church, Which is His body...”
Ephesians 1:22–23.

So the church is the body of Christ. Christ is the head of the body, the church. It is a beautiful symbol—Christ the head, the church the body. And as the head communicates with the body, so Christ communicates with the church. As the head leads, directs, guides, controls, commands the body, so Jesus does all those things for and with His church. This is a very intimate relationship—the relationship between the head and the body. There's a joining there in an organic union. It pictures the intimate relationship between Christ and His church. In this same book, in the fifth chapter, Paul brings the intimate relationship of the marriage into the picture: Jesus as the husband, and the church, as the wife, and the bride.

In the 25th verse, he says:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” Ephesians 5:25.

Oh then these gifts, here's what I wanted you to see, that Jesus has sent from Heaven are for somebody He loves—His church. They are gifts of love. He has set them in this body, the church. And so we read in 1 Corinthians that very statement:

“...God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...”
1 Corinthians 12:28.

Notice that they are not thrown indiscriminately thrown around in a world of confusion. They are set as a diamond in a ring; they are set in the church. When you find His church, you will find Him. You will find these gifts that He has set in the church. You will find those gifts working to build up His church.

Let us notice how long they are to be in the church. Back to Ephesians—“Till we all come in the unity of the faith.” Until God's people are brought to that perfect unity which reflects here on earth the same union that the Father and the Son have in Heaven. Until that perfect day shall dawn when Christ shall come and find His people fully reflecting that divine image. I say till that day, we shall need, and thank God, it is our privilege to have, this light that shines from the throne of God, coming through the channel of these gifts. I thank the Lord for that this morning, don't you?

Jesus, the great Lover, is seeking to guide and protect and build up His church. In the light of these clear Bible statements, let us examine this wonderful gift of the Spirit of Prophecy which God has put in the great Advent movement. Let's go back to the beginning of this movement, back in 1844, that great year of fulfilling prophecy. Let us

think of that little band of believers. A band that I say scattered. They needed to be brought together into a closely-knit band, an organization that could carry a message to all the world.

As we have seen, God sent His angel, Gabriel, to His youthful servant, Ellen Harmon, after her marriage Ellen G. White. During those early years in the 40s and 50s the early 60s, we see vision after vision coming from Heaven through this youthful servant, helping those who were studying the Bible to find how these different truths that they were discovering in the Scriptures fitted together into a great platform of truth.

We also see through this gift visions given, helping to lead the minds of our pioneers into an appreciation of church order and organization. It was necessary that an organization be effected which could carry this message to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, as Revelation 14 says. Under the guidance of this gift, state conferences were organized. And finally, as I mentioned in our last lesson, in 1863 in May, at Battle Creek Michigan was organized the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist.

That organization has grown and grown until now we have in 13 great world divisions of the General Conference, every part of the earth reached to a greater or lesser extent, and missionaries pressing on out into the still un-entered areas. All of that is knit and tied together in a General Conference organizational headquarters at Tacoma Park in Washington D. C.

A wonderful organization, wonderful in its simplicity, wonderful in its far reaching contacts with every mission station every church all over this world that's a part of this great Advent movement. And in all, as we study back through the last 100 years, we see the guidance of these wonderful visions that God has sent and given to the church through this gift.

Now, I would like to notice some of the phases of the work of this movement that have been built up through this gift. Let's go back to 1848. There were only a few score at that time of Sabbath-keeping Adventist in all the world. They were quite poor. They didn't own any printing plant. They had no money to publish. But the press is a great means for spreading the truth.

I want to read you a little statement found in the book, *Christian Experience and teachings of Ellen G. White*, page 128:

“At a meeting held in Dorchester, Massachusetts, November 1848 I had been given a view of the proclamation of the sealing message, and of the duty of the brethren to publish the light that was shining upon our pathway.

“After coming out of vision I said to my husband, ‘I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first. But as the

people read, they will send you means with which to print.
And it will be a success from the first.'

"From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like
streams of light that went clear around the world."

This statement was given over 100 years ago. It's time for us to evaluate it in the light of the years that have followed. What's the story? A few months after this vision, gathering up courage based upon his faith in these visions from God, James White brought from the press this little paper called *The Present Truth*, Middletown, Connecticut, dated July 1849, Volume 1, #1.

That was a work of faith. They were so poor that James White carried the first mailings of this paper in a carpetbag to the post office, walking miles from where they lived to the post office to put them in the mail—carried them on foot. But oh, with that simple and small beginning, it has come to pass exactly as the vision said. It has become like streams of light going all the way around the world. That very paper has continued under the name we now know it, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. It goes literally around the world every week. And truly, the *Review and Herald* is like streams of light, isn't it? Yes.

But in addition to that, and swelling to the volume of millions of dollars of literature every year, we have a stream of magazines, tracts, papers, and books of all types dealing with every phase of doctrine and religious teaching—with the home, with health problems. Think of the great volume and variety of literature issuing from the publishing houses of Seventh-day Adventist today. And you'll find those publishing houses in various parts of the different continents of earth, sending forth its stream of literature in scores of languages to reach the various peoples of earth.

Has the vision been fulfilled? Yes, thank God. From this small beginning, it was shown to me to be like streams of light going clear around the world. Bless the Lord for the great publishing work.

Now, I'd like to come to another wonderful thing. Let me ask you, "Why do Seventh-day Adventists have their own schools?" As citizens, we support the public schools with our taxes, but having paid our taxes to support the public schools, we turn around and dig deep into our pockets to support a great system of private education—church education—dealing with the little children on through the high school grades and into college. We even have a medical college and a seminary.

What is the purpose of all that? Why does this little church devote so much time and energy and money to the building up and maintaining of that educational system? Why, my dear friends, there's one reason, and that is Ellen G. White had visions on this subject. We believe that the angel Gabriel brought from Heaven the light, not merely that we should have some schools, but what to have in those schools. It wasn't merely that there should be Christian teachers and Christian associations for our children and

young people. There were to be Christian textbooks and Christian subjects taught in those schools. And the whole idea of curriculum was to be molded by light from Heaven as to what constitutes education.

In this book, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, the opening chapter is a message that came from the pen of Ellen G. White in 1872. This is a broad, comprehensive, wonderful presentation of the whole subject of education—the meaning of education, the purpose of education, the home as an educational institute, the important place of parents, what parents are to do during the early years is set forth. Then the kind of schools we should have—schools that were to be different from the ordinary educational institutions; schools that combined manual training with the study of books; schools located on the land rather than in great brick buildings in cities; schools where the Bible would be made the basis of education.

That was a wonderful vision to a little group of people who had no facilities of any kind to carry on such a program. But faith responds, faith acts, faith does something. So, in the 70s, we see our people beginning to respond.

It is true that some of those early responses were lacking in carrying the full picture. Man's attempts to carry out God's commands are often feeble and inadequate. So, Battle Creek College was built on the edge of the town rather than out in the country where inspiration had really pointed. Nevertheless, for many years Battle Creek College did a good work. But as we see Christian education expanding and extending under the influence of this gift, we see the providence of God directing the servant of His, this messenger we see Him directing her across the waters to Australia. There during the 1890s we see a work established in that far off continent, a work that was to be a pattern for all our other schools, so the vision said.

You know it's very interesting to read the story of the development of that school in Australia. The Australian Missionary College, it's called today. They started with a little Bible school in one of the large cities of Australia, but message after message kept coming through visions—we must get out in the country, we must get a broad tract of land. But many said it can't be done—we haven't the money, that isn't what the people are interested in. But vision after vision came.

And so finally, as they looked and looked and looked, and sought for they were people of faith to carry out this vision, they found in Coorangbong in New South Wales, a tract of land of over 1,000 acres. The tract of land was surprisingly low in price. But when they inquired, they found that they thought they had a satisfactory explanation for the cheap price. The land was considered to be very unsuitable for agricultural purposes, and the government expert who was called in to examine the land said that a bandicoot, something like one of our jack rabbits, if he went across there would have to carry his lunch with him. He indicated thus his idea was that the land was wholly unsuitable for raising crops.

Nevertheless, Sister White, having seen this very place in vision, said this is the place that God would have. They took the vision instead of the report. They stepped out in faith and bought that land.

After a series of struggles, a school was established there which has trained missionaries not only for all parts of Australia and New Zealand, but up into New Guinea, the thousands of islands of the South Pacific, and on and on until today graduates of that school are found all over the world.

Following the light brought success. It was not merely the building up another school. The vision gave direct directions as to the kind of program to be followed. The students were to work part of the day and study part of the day. The Bible was to be made the basis of education. And with the servant of the Lord living right there on the campus, day after day and week after week the light was given to that faculty as to how to make it a missionary school, how to spend time in the surrounding communities reaching others with the truth, how to help others, how to minister to the sick. It was all included—the industrial, the evangelistic, along with the study of books.

As the result, all over this world, the influence of that pattern school has gone. I thank the Lord for this wonderful light on Christian education, don't you?

The wonderful thing is it's available for you and me in our little homes, in our little schools, where ever we are. Every parent, every teacher, every individual can have the benefit of these visions through this book *Education, Fundamentals of Christian Education, Counsels to Teachers and Parents and Students*, and the other volumes that deal with this wonderful subject. What's it all for? To build up the church, to make ready missionaries in the home field and in the foreign field. And to make ready each individual prepared for the coming of Jesus. I'm glad for that, aren't you?

Coming back to this country just at the turn of the century, Ellen G. White's help at the great General Conference of 1901 through a vision to effect a reorganization of the General Conference that broadened the world vision, and made possible a great foreign mission advance which has sent this message into every part of the globe.

Let me tell you one incident that will interest you very much, I know. In 1904, Edward Sutherland and P. T. Magan, leaders in our educational work, were impressed by the Lord to come to the southern states and establish a little school along the lines that had been pointed out for Avondale—to follow the *Testimonies* closely in making the industrial part of the educational work strong, and making the Bible the basis of education. Ellen White encouraged them in this and met them at Nashville. Going with her son Edson White on his little river steamer, the Morning Star, Sutherland and Magan and Ellen White and her son James Edson steamed up the Cumberland River from Nashville looking for a site.

A few miles from Nashville, at Neely's Bend, the boat tied up for repairs, and Ellen White went to look over a farm which somebody had heard of that was for sale.

As she looked over those acres, they reminded her of what she had seen in vision. She told the brethren that this was the place that the Lord would have them select for their school.

As they looked it over, it presented to them difficulties far beyond what they thought they could handle. As they looked at those limestone rocks outcroppings, as they thought of the price that such a large place would take to pay for and build up, they said they would rather go on up the river and find a little place in the hills. But inspiration was leading. The voice from Heaven said this is the place to establish a training school for teachers and workers who will train self-supporting workers to go out and establish other little schools.

They accepted the counsel in spite of their fears. For the past 50 years, a work has been going on at Madison to train self-supporting workers and to spread out and establish other little centers. What for? To reach people in a practical way with practical ministry, helping the sick, teaching people how to construct simple buildings, to raise their own foods, and through it all to study the Bible and learn how to get ready for the coming of Jesus.

Well dear friends, there are many, many other examples that I could give you of how this wonderful gift from Heaven has been building up the church, the publishing work, the medical work, as I told you in our last lesson, the educational work, and the training of the laity—all, what for? To develop a movement, this would perfect a people for the coming of the King. And remember that it's all because Jesus loves His church. That's why He has sent those gifts. And if we appreciate that love, we shall appreciate these gifts, and allow them to do for us that which Heaven has intended.

Now in our next lesson, I have some most wonderful things to give you, concerning the revelations through this gift, concerning space travel that you will, I know, enjoy.

Let us bow our heads in prayer. Our Father, with all our hearts, we thank Thee that the Great Lover has not left His church without evidence of His love. We thank Thee for these wonderful gifts, which again and again remind us that Thou hast never lost sight of us. We are always in Thy heart. As these gifts make us glad, help us to make Thee glad by letting them work in our lives, that we, with all Thy children, may soon be perfected, made ready for Thy coming, to share in that eternal reunion. We ask it in the name of the One who gave His life upon the cross. Amen.

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