

# Are You in God's Place?

#0748

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 5, 1982

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” John 14:1–3.

A place, a special place prepared for you and me? Is that what He says? I wonder why? He’s just told us in His Father’s house are many mansions already. Why not move into one up there that somebody else lived in once? Ah friends, God knows it takes a special place for *you* because you’re different from anybody else. No flat in some apartment complex.

They were telling me up in New York City in the Bronx, there’s a square block with 60,000 people in four apartment houses—four apartment houses, each one with 15,000 people. I think some of them must get lost finding their particular place.

But oh, it’s nothing like that in heaven, friends. Many mansions, but “I go to prepare a place, a special place, for you” [a paraphrase of John 14:2–3]. I thank God for that wonderful hope. What do you say?

But I tell you there’s something else thrills my heart tonight, for I’ve read an inspired page that says:

“Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 327.

Is that what it says?

“Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God” *Ibid.*

I’m not going to ask you to raise your hand on this question, but are you in the place where you know God has put you? Are you? If you are, you’re a happy man, a happy woman, a happy girl, a happy boy. The greatest happiness in all this world, friends, is to just be where you belong. Nobody can scare you out of it if you know you’re where you belong. And nobody can bribe you out of it. There’s no call that can come over the telephone or in a letter that will upset you, or worry you, or concern you.

Like Nehemiah, you can say:

“...I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down:  
why should the work cease...” Nehemiah 6:3.

That’s it, isn’t it, Brother Cokert? That’s it, isn’t it, Brother Brown? Thank God for the joy of knowing you’re in the place of God’s choosing. And let me say, if there’s somebody here tonight who doesn’t know whether or not you’re where God has put you, do not rest satisfied until you know for sure because, as I say, that’s joy, that’s satisfaction.

You know, there are people that never have that satisfaction all their lives. I feel so sorry for them, so sorry. There’s no way that the world can satisfy that longing that God has put in the human heart to be where you belong, just be where you belong. There’s no fun that can satisfy it, no money that can satisfy it, no promotion or position that can satisfy it—just to know that you’re where God has put you.

What was it that we read there in *Object Lessons*?

“Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is the *special* place designated on earth where we are to work for God” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 327.

Praise God. You know, just as God chooses places for individuals, He chooses places for His work to be carried on. How many of you ever heard of a little village or city called Shiloh in the Old Testament? What was there? What was there? The tabernacle. That was the headquarters of God’s spiritual work in this world for years.

But what happened? Did it stay there? No. Do you know why? Oh, Eli and his sons led an apostasy.

And God said, “I’m through with Shiloh. I’m through with Shiloh.”

And He chose Jerusalem. And there on Mount Moriah, a beautiful temple was built by Solomon, King David’s son. And God manifested His presence in that wonderful temple, copied after the one in heaven. But is it there now? No. For centuries and millenniums, that’s all been gone. Why? Ah friends, the people that God had put there to carry on His work missed it all. And they nailed to the cross the One that that temple was to honor and represent.

So, God has places, but He doesn’t consider them permanent unless the people that are there keep the vision. Am I correct? It’s been so in the history of this church. How many of you ever heard of Paris, Maine? Just a few of you. Paris, Maine, at one time, was the place where the streams of light shone out from, as the little paper *Present Truth* was published.

But Paris, Maine missed the opportunity, and the pillar of cloud moved on to Rochester, New York. More of you have heard of Rochester, where our first denominationally-owned press was set up. And a company of workers, under the leadership of young James and Ellen White, lived there, worked there, prayed together, and suffered poverty together to carry on the publishing and evangelistic work.

But do you know what happened? The people in that area, the church members, became critical. And God moved westward again to Battle Creek. More of you have heard of Battle Creek, haven't you? For decades the name "Battle Creek" more and more became synonymous with "Seventh-day Adventist," Seventh-day Adventist health work, Seventh-day Adventist publishing work, Seventh-day Adventist educational work, and the headquarters of the church were all right there in Battle Creek. But is Battle Creek today synonymous with the Seventh-day Adventist work? No, the cloud has moved.

My point is this, friends. God loves the place that He has established, but He won't tarry there forever unless the program that's carried on there is of His planting. Back of the place is the program.

You've heard of a place called Wildwood, haven't you? Yes. But the thing that makes Wildwood is not the geography. It's not the beautiful hills and valleys, the trees, the flowers, the buildings. It's the program that makes the place. Are you with me? And unless we keep the vision of the program, the place can become like Shiloh, or like Rochester, like Jerusalem, or like Battle Creek. God forbid that we should lose the vision and that the program should be lost sight of. What do you say?

And while I'm speaking tonight directly to this point, remember what we started out with, that every individual has a special place. Your special place may not be on this campus. Some of you are visiting from the community or from farther away. This is fine. We welcome you all here every Friday night because God meets with us, doesn't He?

But listen, friends, wherever your place is, everything I'm saying tonight is right on the point. There is no place in this world so sacred that just being in the place is going to save you. There's no place in this work so important that just being there means that you're accomplishing what you ought. There must be a program, whether it's your individual home, or an institution, whether it's a church, a school, a publishing house, a sanitarium, a restaurant. The place is important because of the program carried on there. Are you with me?

But there's something that's back of the program. See if you agree with me that just as the program is what makes the place, there's something that makes the program. And without this something that makes the program, the program itself can degenerate into just a lot of activity, a turning of wheels. It takes more and more machinery to accomplish things because the principles are what make the program what it ought to be—principles.

Let me see, what's the difference between principles and program?

[Audience] Principles are guidelines for the program.

That's right.

Many years ago, when I was a young man, a friend of mine was teaching at an institution in the far north. He wrote me something that was very interesting. It interested me at the time; it does still.

There were teachers and students in that school that decided they wanted to follow the blueprint. And so, they searched the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to find out what they should do about various things. Among the subjects they studied was the subject of recreation and amusements. And they decided that they wanted their recreation and amusements to be just what God wanted. Was that good?

And so, they studied all they could find on baseball. No, I don't mean that was the only thing they studied. You'll see why I mentioned it in a moment. And everything they could find about baseball was unfavorable, and so they decided they wouldn't have baseball. But they looked for all they could find on basketball, and there wasn't anything on basketball, so they played basketball instead of baseball.

Now, that really happened. Can you see what they were missing? They were interested in following a program that was right. But not looking beyond the program back of the program to the principles, they simply substituted one competitive game which wasn't mentioned for another that was mentioned.

What is the principle that leads us to seek something better than baseball or any one of those games? It's the principle of rivalry, of competition.

It's a principle that "I want to beat you so that I can win."

You know, dear friends, I thank God for the principle of love. And I find out that the more I love somebody, the less interested I am in beating him. And it works that way.

I just use this as an illustration. Why do we have sanitariums? Because the Lord gave us that as a part of the program, but does it make any difference what we do in the sanitarium and why we do it? Yes. And so, with the school and the farm and all the rest, we should seek the principles, the principles, the principles.

Back of every health habit is a principle. Study the principle, not just the habit. Why do we drink water? Why do we not eat between meals? Why is it that we eat certain foods and don't eat certain other ones? Some people are glib at reciting the chapter and verse in the Bible, or the book and the page of the Spirit of Prophecy that tells us about those things. This is good. That's the program. But oh, friends, to understand the principles!

"A knowledge of physiology and hygiene should be the basis of all educational effort" *Education*, page 195.

It's a wonderful thing when a child can say when he's asked to eat something between meals, he says, "No, thank you. I don't eat between meals."

"Why don't you eat between meals?"

If all he knows is that the *Ministry of Healing* says not to, that's good, but there is a better way, isn't there, friends? To be able to explain in a simple way that the stomach, like the rest of the body, works on a regular order and that the stomach needs time to digest the previous food and get ready for the next meal. And that we love our Creator enough that we want to take care of the body He's given us on a regular basis. Do you see?

So, let us encourage in our own hearts and in the hearts of our students, with the children in our homes, a study not merely of the details of the program, but of what? The principles. This is one of the greatest safeguards against fanaticism and extreme ideas, friends. Yes.

A friend of mine was telling of an experience that happened a number of years ago at one of our schools. There was a young man in the dormitory, had a roommate, and the roommate had to go home for some emergency. And he had one of these steamer trunks, and the trunk was loaded with things so that it took two people to carry it.

And so, he asked his roommate if he would assist him in taking this steamer trunk down to the bus stop which was just at the foot of the hill, so he could catch the bus. Do you know what the roommate said?

He said, "I will just as soon as I finish my devotions. Just as soon as I finish my time for Bible study and prayer, I'll go with you."

But that would make him too late to catch the bus. His program idea was correct, wasn't it? But what was the purpose of the devotions? Was it just to carry out a ritual? Wasn't it to get the power and the love to help others? Do you see what I'm talking about, friends?

And you know, life can be sweet when we focus on the principles instead of just thinking about the program all the time. But oh, friends, if the principles are more important than the program, there's something far more important than the principles. See if you agree with me. It's a person. And who is that? Jesus, Jesus.

Is He the One that gives us the principles that are back of the program that make the place important? Ah, yes. Happy is the one that knows that he's in the place that Jesus has put him, following the program that Jesus has planned, understanding the principles that Christ has revealed.

The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy. Jesus spoke through Moses, through Isaiah, through Daniel, through Ezekiel, through Peter and through Paul, through John and the Revelation. From beginning to end, this Bible is the testimony of Jesus.

And the writings of the modern messenger to the remnant, oh friends, how beautiful it is to get acquainted better with the Savior as He speaks to us through those pages, *Desire of Ages* and *Steps to Christ*, *Ministry of Healing*, *Christ Object Lessons*, *Counsels on Diet and Foods* and all the rest.

And so, in the words of the ancient poetic book of Job:

“Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee” Job 22:21.

Oh, dear ones, what a joy it is to see the program in the place as the revelation of the principles of a person, Jesus, Jesus. Why am I here? Because I love Jesus. Why am I doing the particular work? Because I love Jesus.

You see, friends, this is the real key to happiness. No place can make you happy. No program can make you happy. No principles of themselves can make you happy. They were never intended to. It's Jesus that makes you happy, Jesus that makes you happy. To have fellowship with Him, this is joy. Am I correct? You know it's true.

“Oh, how I love Jesus because He first loved me.” Let's sing it.

“There is a name I love to hear,  
I love to sing its worth;  
It sounds music in my ear,  
The sweetest name on earth.

Refrain:

O, how I love Jesus, O, how I love Jesus,  
O, how I love Jesus—Because He first loved me!”  
*Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, #248, first stanza.

Do you? I know you do. Wouldn't you like to come and tell somebody else about it? We're going to have a little praise service now. Come and thank God for your Savior. Come and praise His name, Who loved you enough to die for you. Thank God that you're in the place of His choosing if you know you are. If you don't know it, don't say so, but you *can* make up your mind to seek Him till you know.

But remember, the place is the place of Jesus' choosing. The program is the program that He has inspired. The principles are the revelation of His character. It's fellowship with Him as a person that brings joy.

So come, all who would like, and let's praise the Lord here tonight.

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