

I AM THE LORD WHO MAKES YOU HOLY

by Herb Montgomery



"Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it [made it holy]." — Genesis 2:3

"And also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies [makes holy] them." — Ezekiel 20:12

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." — Ephesians 2:8-10

This is the glorious truth of the Gospel! It is God who has made us holy in His Son! Allow me to illustrate this great gospel truth through the lens of the Bible's teaching on the Sabbath.

I would like you to ponder those three verses above. First, God makes a day holy. Second, He makes this day holy so that we might know that it is He who makes us holy. Third, He has accomplished this for us in His Son! We are His workmanship! It is He who has done it and will continue to do it.

"For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." — Philippians 1:6

This point is clearly seen in one of Paul's most famous statements to the believers in Ephesus:

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, [He] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and [He] raised us up with Him, and [He] seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in [His] kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." — Ephesians 2:4-7

The antithesis to this truth is the thought that man can save himself; that man can make himself or anything else holy. This thought runs in complete contradiction to the finished work of God for us in Christ. But once again, let's look at this truth through the lens of the Bible's teaching on the Sabbath.

The only day that God has ever spoken of as holy is the seventh day of the week. That day God Himself has made holy, and all He asks of us is that we keep it holy. Now follow carefully. Since God has not made Sunday holy, it follows that if man is to keep it holy, man himself must first make it holy. All the sacredness in the world that Sunday can possibly have is only that which man has given to it. The Sunday "sabbath," therefore, is a sign, not that it is the Lord who makes holy, but that man

possesses the supposed power to make things holy. And if man can make one thing holy (a day), it is evident that he can make anything holy (himself). If man can make and keep a day holy, then he can make and keep himself holy. And this, dear friend, is a denial of the gospel.

But please be careful to make a distinction. In the words of E.J. Waggoner, *"Take notice that this is said of Sunday, and not of all those who regard it as a holy day. There are thousands who are keeping [Sunday], honestly supposing it to be the Sabbath of the Lord. Such, of course, believe in justification by faith, although they unwittingly observe the sign of justification by works. It is for the benefit of such that this article is written, that they may be wholly consistent in their profession of faith. We are dealing with facts, regardless of how men may stand related to them; and the facts are that the Lord's Sabbath is justification by faith; the [Sunday] sabbath means justification by works, and that man's own works."* — Apples of Gold Library No. 58

In Psalms 111:4, the psalmist writes, *"He has made His wonderful works to be remembered"* or, literally, *"He has made a memorial for His wondrous works."* That memorial is the seventh day, not just of your Creation, dear friend, but your Salvation in Christ as well. Are you tired of trying to make yourself holy, dear friend? Rest. Rest in the perfect, completed work of Jesus on your behalf.

"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."

— Matthew 11:28-30

"There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His."

— Hebrews 4:9-10 †

Thoughts to Ponder—

"Total darkness settled upon me and there seemed no way out of the shadows. Could the truth have been presented to me as I now understand it, my despondency would have taken flight at once, much perplexity and sorrow would have been spared me. If the love of God had been dwelt upon more and his stern justice less, the beauty and glory of his character would have inspired me with a deep and earnest love for my Creator."

Ellen G. White,
Life Sketches, pg. 153

MINISTRY UPDATE

Young People Glow In the Dark! Rocklin, CA

The Sunset Oaks Seventh-day Adventist Church, feeling the call to reach out to Northern California's youth, decided to make a difference. The church itself rented another location for their adult members to have their normal church service, and then they took their facility and put on an area-wide, entire weekend of events, worship, and Gospel presentations for churched and unchurched young people alike. And that's where my involvement came in. I had the distinct privilege of giving the "Gospel presentations" part.

Friday night we looked at the importance of having a right picture of God. Then on Sabbath day, we began the quest to obtain that picture. We looked at three topics: the love relationship among the members of the Godhead and how we were created to share in that relationship; the difficult subject of "if God loves us so much, then why does he allow bad things to happen to us?"; and then we finished off with a passionate meditation on Calvary—the greatest picture this world has ever been given of the character of God and His great love for us. I then asked for the young people that evening to come forward and make a decision for Jesus—to make a response to God's great love revealed through Calvary—and over 150 young people came forward! Praise God! If darkness is all the lies that have been told concerning God, and light is the truth concerning God, then we were most definitely "Glowing in the Dark."

Adventist Community Services Retreat at Leoni Meadows

Leoni Meadows, Northern California Conference
Retreat Center

Each year, the Northern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (NCC) puts on a four-day retreat for their Adventist Community Services workers—a retreat full of fun activities, workshops, and spiritual renewal. This year the NCC extended the invitation to Renewed Heart Ministries to come and share four presentations during their retreat. The responses were extraordinary. One evening toward the close



of the retreat, a 76-year-old man came up to me in tears. He threw his arms around me and then expressed, "I've had the wrong picture for 76 years. I have the wrong picture for 76 years!" I asked Him to explain and he simply stated, "I have had the wrong picture of our God for 76 years; thank you so much for showing me this week His love."

Also during this week I was privileged to meet Phyllis Hendry, president of Lead Like Jesus ministries, an interdenominational Georgia-based Christian leadership ministry associated with Christian leaders such as Ken Blanchard, Rick Warren, Laurie Beth Jones, Bill Hybels, Rosey Grier, Dan Cathy, and Phil Hodges. What impressed me most about Phyllis is her deep devotion to Jesus Christ and the incredible clarity in which she is able to inspire others to follow Him. After my final presentation on Calvary, Phyllis met me at the door. "Now that was the Gospel!" Phyllis, if you happen to be reading this, I wish you Godspeed. I look forward to seeing you in the kingdom.

A Rich Weekend of Awakening Show Low, AZ

This weekend was another amazing weekend for all involved. The seminar presented was The Awakening based on the principle that By Love, Love is Awakened. The testimonies expressed this weekend made it evident that a deeper view of God's wondrous love for us had, once again, awakened deeper devotion and commitment to Him and to His call to proclaim the truth of His character of love to this dying world. (Christ Object Lessons, pg. 416)

Pleasant Hill Community Encounters Life Unlimited!

Pleasant Hill, CA

After experiencing God's love anew at Redwood Campmeeting last year, the Pleasant Hill Seventh-day Adventist Church wanted to share what they had encountered



with the community surrounding their church. We covered seventeen presentations over the course of ten days which were dedicated to seeing the truth of the Character of Love through the lens of Seventh-day Adventist teaching. And what an amazing experience it was! We had over 65 visitors from the community attend, five folks accepted Jesus as their Savior for the very first time, five other folks requested more information on baptism, and eleven more signed up to continue with Bible Studies. These were responding positively to our unique teachings such as the Sabbath, the State of the Dead, Annihilation, and some of our prophetic understandings—all as a means of more deeply understanding and experiencing God's love for us in the light of the cross.

The Beginning of the End of All Things is At Hand!

Highland Academy, Portland, TN

It was my great honor last month to be given the privilege of sharing in the Highland Academy class of 2007's graduation ceremony. During the school year of 05-06 we had an incredible experience together during their fall week of prayer. Over seventy-five percent of the student body made decisions for Jesus that week. This year I was asked to come back and deliver the 2007 graduating class's commencement address. You can download this eight-minute presentation for yourself on the resource page of our website. To the class of 2007: May your aim "to finish His work" be the aim of us all. Congratulations!



"Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph. 4:7. The measure of the gift of Christ is "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." This is true whether viewed as the measure of the gift that God made in giving Christ or as the measure of the gift that Christ Himself gave. For the gift that God gave is His only begotten Son, and in "him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Therefore, the measure of the gift of Christ being only the measure of the fullness of the Godhead bodily and this being only the measure of the grace that is given to every one of us, it follows that unto every one of us is given grace without measure, simply boundless grace. The plain word of the Lord is that unto every one of us He has given grace to the measure of the fullness of the Godhead bodily; that is, boundless, immeasurable grace—all the grace He has. This is good. But it is just the Lord; it is just like the Lord to do that, for He is good.

And this boundless grace is all given, given freely, to "every one of us." To us it is. To you and me, just as we are. And that is good. We need just that much grace to make us what the Lord wants us to be. And He is just so kind as to give it all to us freely so that we may be, indeed, just what He wants us to be.

The Lord wants every one of us to be saved, and that with the very fullness of salvation. And therefore He has given to every one of us the very fullness of grace, because it is grace that brings the salvation. For it is written, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11. Thus the Lord wants all to be saved, and therefore He gave all of His grace, bringing salvation to all. The marginal reading of this text tells it that way, and it is just as true as the reading in the verse itself. Here it is: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared." All the grace of God is given freely to every one, bringing salvation to all. Whether all or any one will receive it, that is another question. What we are studying now is the truth and the fact that God has given it. Having given it all, He is clear, even though men may reject it. —A.T. Jones, Review and Herald, April 17, 1894

REQUEST A SEMINAR!

Would you like to experience God's love for you more deeply than you ever have before? Would you like your relationship with God to become more alive and passionate?

Would you like to truly understand the teachings of our church in the light of the Gospel of God's love?

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TESTIMONIES . . .

Listened to Extravagant Love. Changed my life, by God's grace. Thank you for letting Him use you!—GB

I listened to your talk on Hell on my daily commute and was convicted all over again; our God is a God of Love.—SH

I just want you to know how much I appreciate your ministry. I can't even express it to you in the way I would like. My picture of God has been that of a stern parent, difficult to please—not consciously and intellectually have I seen Him like this, but deep down in my heart, unerasable. And all the while I have been longing to be cherished and safe. But I haven't felt safe. I have only felt safe as far as my own behavior can take me. I have felt angry toward Him, thinking that if He really loved me, He would give me what I want more than anything—eternal life with Him. But I have felt as if He couldn't be trusted—that He might take it away from me at some point along the way. Please pray for me that the truth of His love will

change me altogether. I asked myself, "Can this really be true? Please tell me this is true!" It is Friday evening. I have been listening to Herb Montgomery. Many blessings to you. Please remain faithful.—KA

"Changed my life, by God's grace...."

I want to share a letter of testimony with you of a life that has been drastically changed and even 'saved' by your ministry. Thank you for all that you do to teach us who God really is! — Last evening I had such a strange sensation about my relationship with God. I found my mind continually flitting back to Him, with such a tenderness and inquisitiveness.... like I could not wait to get back to Him and to know more. Even at this —"the very beginning of what will be the most beautiful relationship that I could ever dream of knowing"—I am already seeing Him differently. Last night there was peace in my home for the first time, I think, ever. And my heart was light and had hope. I sang through my chores, cuddled my

daughter and granddaughter, read stories to them with an earnest heart, and went to sleep with a restful spirit, but again my mind was active....inquisitive. Your prayers have showed me what intercession can do in the life of another. Like Nicodemus I haven't had a clue, and I don't know what he felt prior to his evening meeting with our Lord, but up until last night I had grown to hate my Christian experience and wanted nothing of it any more even at the loss of my own salvation....because of what I saw. And I in turn allowed others to see (in me) what I believed that I saw in God. Never will I ever be able to thank you enough. Yesterday when I sat at my desk and listened to "Who do you see?" by Herb Montgomery, I sat and cried, because I didn't see what Herb saw, but now I am beginning to.—C

Just heard Herb Montgomery speak at the Arizona camp meeting... all I can say is, "Awesome!" This young man is being used mightily by the Lord.—D †



CALENDAR

May 27-June 2, 2007

Kingman SDA Church
Kingman, AZ
928.757.9577

June 8-9, 2007

Battle Creek Tabernacle SDA
Church Battle Creek, MI
269.962.1228

June 30, 2007

Lewisburg SDA Church
Lewisburg, WV
304.647.5925

July 19-28, 2007

Northern California Conference
Campmeeting,
Redwood National Forest
Redcrest, CA
925.685.4300

August 9-11, 2007

Cincinnati, Ohio
Wedding Sermon
by invitation only

August 17-18, 2007

Durant SDA Church
Durant, OK
580.924.4019

August 25, 2007

Summersville SDA Church
Summersville, WV
304.872.6958

August 31-September 1, 2007

Adventist Christian Fellowship
Los Cruces, NM
505.642.7578

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