A hiker with a large blue and red backpack stands on a rocky peak, looking out over a vast, cloudy sky. The hiker is wearing a light blue shirt, khaki pants, and hiking boots. The sky is a mix of deep blue and white clouds, creating a dramatic backdrop. The overall scene conveys a sense of adventure and overcoming challenges.

He

Who

Overcomes

*Youth Revival Week
June 22 – 30, 2018*



INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
REFORM MOVEMENT

General Conference Youth Department

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Introduction

Dear youth leaders and youth of the church of Christ, I have the joy of greeting you in the name of our Lord with the text of Psalms, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!”

The youth are an important part of the people of God. Because of their vitality and enthusiasm, they can do a special work if they allow themselves to be guided by the Savior’s hand. In the past, many great deeds recorded for posterity were accomplished by young people. Daniel and his companions distinguished themselves as spokesmen for the true God; their integrity, courage, and faith shone unparalleled in the first world empire. Joseph is an example to be imitated by all the youth, because he dedicated his life to God and remained faithful in the worst circumstances, without caring about the consequence. As a result, he was honored by the Lord and came to occupy the highest post in Egypt after Pharaoh. Someone like Joseph, who seemed to be destined for prison and misfortune, was the reason for the people of Israel settling in this pagan land during times when famine was ravaging throughout, and it was there where they found protection, shelter, and sustenance.

A decision in favor of the truth can cause an unstoppable tide of blessings. Recall the story of David, who in the vigor of his youth, decided to face the giant Goliath. He did not compare himself with him, he simply trusted in the power of God and was not disappointed. His action of faith led Israel to overcome the Philistines. This is how God works with young people who decide to clean their ways and keep the divine word. No youth who makes the decision to give his life to Christ will be disappointed, but he will be like a spring of water that jumps for eternal life (John 4:14). The young man who enters the ranks of Christ will encounter large and small difficulties, problems that will assail him and seem to sink him, but he will not fail,

since God has promised to grant him victory over evil: “ ‘For I am with you to deliver you,’ says the Lord.” Jeremiah 1: 8.

With the favor of the Lord we have been able to prepare some topics for the last week of June, here compiled in this Youth Revival Week. They have all been elaborated by youth leaders from different unions and missionary fields. We kindly request the leaders send these readings to as many young people as possible, so that they may study and share them with other companions and friends. Our suggestion is that during the week the young people meet wherever possible, and on Saturday, June 30, the reading will take place in the afternoon during the youth meeting. The special offering for this Saturday will be destined for the Youth Department of the General Conference and will be used for the development of projects for the department.

May the Lord bless you richly. We encourage you to move forward and that you may be “more than overcomers.” Amen.

Pastor José V. Giner

Youth Leader of the General Conference

1. The Battle of the Christian

Elvis Echavarria, USA

American Union Youth Leader

June 22, 2018 – Friday

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
2 Corintios 4:17-18.

An important attribute

Human beings possess five senses: the eyes for sight, the tongue for taste, the nose for scent, the ears for audition, and the skin for touch. By far the most important organs of sense are the eyes. We perceive up to 80% of all impressions by means of sight. If other senses such as taste or smell cease operation, it's the eyes that best protect us from danger.

Vision is dependent on three fundamental parameters: light, reflection, and focus. Light has to be reflected from an object, focused by our cornea and lens, and then processed by photoreceptors in the retina for us to experience the world through sight. If any of these variables exhibit a minute distortion beyond the

stringent tolerance specifications of our biophysical framework, we experience an anamorphic reality. This is why some of us need corrective lenses for sharp vision and why others are “colorblind.”

The banana is the most consumed fruit in the world, with over 1,000 varieties eaten around the globe. If I were to ask you what is the color of a banana, what would you say? I think all would agree in saying that most ripe bananas are yellow. But what if I told you that you were wrong? What if I told you that what you were taught since childhood is incorrect, that a banana is not actually yellow? What if I told you that your sense of sight was deceiving you and causing you to see an alternate reality? When light hits an object and reflects into our eyes,

the color we see is only the light that reaches our eyes, not the light that is absorbed by the aforementioned object. In the case of our banana, the color we see is yellow, because that is the only color that is not being absorbed by our appetizing friend. Hence, the true pigmentation of a banana then, is the combination of all the colors that are absorbed therein. Since you're anxious to know I will tell you, a banana is actually of a dark blue tint.

A skewed perception

"We don't see things as they are. We see them as we are (Anais Nin)." We have just discovered that what we experience through our senses is not always what is; we should not depend on them as a guide for our life. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise." Proverbs 12:15. There is a world beyond our senses and feelings. Paul speaks of a battle waging in and around us: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12.

The war that began in heaven when sin was found in the heart of Lucifer has come to be fought on earth. It is a battle for your heart and your will.

God offers all a free will and a proven formula for success. Satan offers iron fetters wrapped in an illusion of freedom. As a youth one is brimming with plans, aspirations, ambitions, and dreams for the future, but do you perceive the hidden world and the one to come? Where do you invest your time? "Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth." Colossians 3:2. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21. Satan wishes nothing more than to see you fail. He has millennia of experience and all the tools to bring about your ultimate demise, but only if you allow him. In this week we will study the artifices the enemy uses and how we can gain the victory over the great deceiver of men and our own sinful proclivities. As young members of God's family, it is pivotal to learn to see through Satan's hologram of deceit, peel back the gilded mirage, and perceive with the filter of truth. "Anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see." Revelation 3:18.

An elevated perspective

“But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. Once one has acquired an enlightened perception through His Spirit, once the knowledge of the truth is grasped and our purpose is known, it is only then the journey of the Christian begins. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13.

The word *perspective* is derived from the Latin *per*, meaning “forward” or “through,” and *specere*, meaning to “look” or “observe.” The question then arises, what must we look forward to or through? In every war there are triumphs and failures, and so it is in the Christian life. You will make mistakes; you will find yourself face to face with your shortcomings and weaknesses. You will experience difficulties in your journey and at times you will fail, but character is not measured by missteps taken, but by how one responds to those mistakes. We can only grow by learning from prior faults and

moving forward one step and day at a time. What you must decide, is to whom you will yield your will and against whom you will fight. Will you surrender to temptation and abandon the struggle?

“Life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up. Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time (Thomas Edison).” This is the ethos of the soldier of God, a Spartan ever in pursuit of imminent triumph, of which Paul asserts: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Romans 8:18.

Heaven’s causeway

In 2011, I had the pleasure of working with Pastor José Vicente Giner in an international youth conference in Greece. Being fascinated with Greek mythology and culture from childhood, I leapt at the opportunity to collaborate in a project that would take us to the cradle of western civilization. While there, we visited the primary locations mentioned in Paul’s epistles and all

the major historical sites: from the Acropolis, to the oracle of Delphi, Corinth, Thessalonica, and the monasteries of Meteora. Yet there was one place of special significance to me that we couldn't quite make; I was only able to see it from a distance. Like Tantalus of the old myths, I was close, but just not close enough.

The Gulf of Corinth slices deep into mainland Greece, but at its western end it's very narrow. To avoid a 280-mile (450 km) detour around mainland Greece, you only need to cross this small stretch of water. On one side of the gulf is found the city of Rion, on the other Antirion. More than a hundred years ago, the prime minister of Greece dreamed of a new bridge in Europe, a bridge to connect these two places. This century old engineering dream was realized in 2004, just in time for the Greek Olympics: a bridge crossing the Gulf of Corinth in Greece. But this was no regular construction—it brought together an unparalleled series of environmental, physical, and geographical challenges, the likes of which had never been seen before. The bridge stretches nearly 2 miles (3 km) across some of the most seismic active earth-

quake zones in Europe and sits in a powerful, natural wind tunnel. In addition to there being nothing solid found for hundreds of feet below the sea floor on which to build, the sea at 210 ft. is too deep for bridge piers, and the coasts it connects are moving away from each other. Ultimately, it proved to be a testament to success, where according to some, failure was the only likely outcome. *Analysing the Case of the Rion-Antirion Bridge Through the Lenses of a Redefined Notion of MUTP Success* (Kaparos, George).

Today it is known as “The Earthquake-Proof Bridge,” being that it can resist tremors reaching up to 7.4 on the Richter scale. In engineering circles, the Rion–Antirion Bridge is what we call an engineering masterpiece, a marvel of herculean proportions; proving that **if you want to achieve something that has never been achieved, you have to overcome obstacles that have never been overcome.**

In this structure is found an underlying lesson for us as Christians. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6. Paul declared, “For there is

one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 2:5. Regardless of the challenges you may face, Jesus is your sure foundation, always present in time of need. Any difficulty we may encounter He has already overcome and is at the ready with the solution. With every passing moment this world drifts further away from its Creator. Yet as in Michelangelo’s fresco—The Creation of Adam—Jesus stretches forth, “with one hand He lays hold of sinners upon earth,

and with the other He grasps the throne of the Infinite...” bridging the ever-growing void effected by sin. *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pg. 487.

Wherever you may find yourself at this moment in the pilgrimage of life, pray that God may grant you divine perception and perseverance, that one day you may also declare: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2 Timothy 4:7. Amen.

We can only grow by learning from prior faults and moving forward one step and day at a time. What you must decide, is to whom you will yield your will and against whom you will fight.

2. Human Nature

Antenor Terrones León, Peru

Peruvian Union Youth Leader

June 23, 2018 – Saturday

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. Genesis 1:27-28.

These texts show us that the Lord created the human being in His image and likeness. In doing so, he had a wise purpose in mind: that every human being should become a reflection of his infinite character and love. We should, therefore, take time to understand why God created us and with what nature He made us.

“In order to understand what is comprehended in the work of education, we need to consider both the nature of man and the purpose of God in creating him.” *Education*, pg. 14.

It is also very important to understand what happened after the human being decided to sin, what happened to his holy nature? Was there any change in his constitution and mind? The purpose of this pra-

yer conference is to understand the human nature after sin and what solution we have in order to be restored to the original state.

A sinful nature

God does not do anything by chance, everything has a purpose, as we saw. According to the testimonies, “God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. *The Truth About Angels*, pg. 48.

It was God’s purpose to repopulate heaven with the human family if they would show themselves obedient to His every word. Adam was to be tested, to see whether he would be obedient, as the loyal angels, or disobedient.” *Christ Trium-*

phant, pg. 26.

If the human being had endured the test, his spiritual growth would not have been limited and his character would have perfectly reflected the character of God. In reality, God desired humans to take the place of fallen angels. But first he had to pass an obedience test. The law of God had to be respected, but disgracefully, the human decided to sin. His nature was transformed and he became a natural enemy of God (2 Peter 2:19). For Adam and Eve, before sinning it was natural to obey their Creator, to serve Him, to love Him. They didn't need to think about it, it arose spontaneously. It was a joy and a deep delight. But after the fall, they no longer found that joy; they felt fear and hid themselves from the presence of God. Sin takes us away from God, sin eliminates holiness and places us in the enemy's realm. Sin has transformed the holy nature of the human into a sinful nature.

"The only safety now is to search for the truth as revealed in the word of God, as for hid treasure. The subjects of the Sabbath, the nature of man, and the testimony of Jesus are the great and important truths

to be understood; these will prove as an **anchor** to hold God's people in these perilous times." Testimony Treasures, vol. 1, pg. 98.

When we come to this world we bring a perverse nature, but even so we can progress to a high spiritual level. This is the good news, this is our hope. Alone we cannot do anything, but by the grace of Christ we can reach heights that we cannot imagine and return to harmony with our Creator. If we do not cultivate the nature of Jesus in us, our sinful nature predominates, but when we give ourselves to Christ we are ennobled and refined through his imparted righteousness. That is the work done by the Holy Spirit (John 3:8).

The most important thing, then, is not that a person go to church, but that he accept Christ as his personal Savior, so that the work of transforming their character may be done; congregating in church will be an inevitable consequence. Only in Christ can we find salvation (Acts 4:12). The message "Christ our Righteousness" does not only include the forgiveness of our sins, but a change in our way of being, a transformation of our sinful nature, because whoever is in Christ is a new

creature (2 Corinthians 5:17). The message of “Christ our Righteousness” is the power of God to overcome sin.

We must understand that by nature, since we are begotten, we are completely rebellious against God and against his Law, and when we see rebellion in our children, we need to understand that this rebellion is part of our nature and we need the wisdom of God to be able to correct ourselves and in turn also help our children. The human being cannot render that which God demands in order to be saved. Since its fall, the human tendency has been to separate more and more from the Creator. Paul says that there is not even a righteous person who does good (who submits to the law of God) on this earth (Romans 3:10-11). All humans are born with a sinful nature, with tendencies inherited and cultivated towards evil.

As Adam and Eve fell, the image of God became blurred and death entered this world. Their descendants—we are all humans—partake of this degraded nature and also the consequences thereof, such as diseases, moral decay, and a polluted planet. At birth, every human

brings its weaknesses and tendencies towards evil. This must be clear to everyone.

A message of hope

God, in Christ, has reconciled the world to Himself, and through the work of the Holy Spirit it is possible to restore every mortal who repents of his sins to the image of the Maker. The law condemns the sinner, and irrefutably we are all destitute of the glory of God because all have sinned. Now, how can we be restored to the image of God? Through the work of the Lord Jesus. He came to this earth taking man’s nature and showed that Adam in his holy state need not have fallen into sin. He also showed that the law of God is holy, just, and good; that Satan’s accusations were not true. The devil had fomented the lie that God is unjust and a tyrant. That His law is so difficult that nobody can submit to it. When Adam and Eve fell into sin, it seemed that the enemy’s assertions had been confirmed. That is why Christ came to this world, to show that Adam sinned because he wanted to and not because he was forced to do so.

Jesus came to vindicate the law of God. It was prophesied that

it would be so (Isaiah 42:21). The Lord did not adopt a human appearance, but was 100% human, but without sin (Hebrews 4:15). John tells us in the Gospel that “He was made flesh,” (John 1:1) and came to live among us. Is not this something wonderful? The fact that he was 100% human and 100% God does not mean that He used His divinity to eradicate of the trials He had to face. If it had been so, the devil would have accused Him. Jesus never sinned. His delight was to obey His Father, it is written that doing the will of the one who sent him was His priority and that the law was in the midst of his heart (Psalm 40:8).

“Jesus took human nature, passing through infancy, childhood, and youth, that He might know how to sympathize with all, and leave an example for all children and youth. He is acquainted with the temptations and weaknesses of children.” *Lift Him Up*, pg. 91.

“In taking upon Himself man’s nature in its **fallen condition**, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin.... He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet **He knew no sin**.... We

should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, pg. 256.

“Satan again rejoiced with his angels that he could, by causing man’s fall, pull down the Son of God from His exalted position. He told his angels that when Jesus should take **fallen man’s nature**, he could overpower Him and hinder the accomplishment of the plan of salvation.” *Early Writings*, pg. 152.

“Christ did not make believe take human nature; **He did verily take it**. He did in reality possess human nature. ‘As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.’ Hebrews 2:14. He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the Man Christ Jesus.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, pg. 147.

Wonderful Savior who deigns to take our human nature to rescue us from eternal damnation! The Word of God announces to us the complete victory of Christ against sin and the absolute defeat of Satan (1 Corinthians 15:55). We can hold onto the hand of the Savior.

Our example to follow

Jesus overcame sin; Satan did not cajole Him to sin even though the temptations of the Savior were very strong. How did Christ prevail? Jesus, our model, depended on prayer. The inspired pen tells us: “Stepping a little aside from them, the Man of Sorrows pours out His supplications with strong crying and tears. He prays for strength to endure the test in behalf of humanity. He must Himself gain a fresh hold on Omnipotence, for only thus can He contemplate the future. And He pours out His heart longings for His disciples, that in the hour of the power of darkness their faith may not fail.” *The Desire of Ages*, pg. 419.

“He was constantly in communion with His Father, and His life presents to us a perfect pattern which we are to imitate.” *Ye Shall Receive Power*, pg. 14.

Jesus urges us to remain united in Him (John 15:4-5). “There is nothing in us from which we can clothe the soul so that its nakedness shall not appear. We are to receive the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of heaven, even the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness. We are to say, ‘He died for me. He

bore my soul’s disgrace, that in His name I might be an overcomer and be exalted to His throne.’” *That I May Know Him*, pg. 302.

“... Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you...” James 4:7-8.

“Through Christ, and Christ alone, the springs of life can vitalize man’s nature, transform his tastes, and set his affections flowing toward heaven. Through the union of the divine with the human nature Christ could enlighten the understanding and infuse His life-giving properties through the soul dead in trespasses and sins.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, pg. 341.

“Jesus has helped the whole world to an intelligent knowledge of His divine mission and work. He came to represent the character of the Father to our world, and as we study the life, the words, and works of Jesus Christ, we are helped in every way in the education of obedience to God; and as we copy the example He has given us, we are living epistles known and read of all men. We are the living human agencies to represent in character Jesus Christ to the world. Not only did

Christ give explicit rules showing how we may become obedient children, but He showed us in His own life and character just how to do those things which are right and acceptable with God, so there is no excuse why we should not do those things which are pleasing in His sight.” *Lift Him Up*, pg. 169.

“Human beings need to learn that the blessings of obedience, in their fullness, can be theirs only as they receive the grace of Christ. It is His grace that gives men and women power to obey the laws of God. It is this that enables them to break the bondage of evil habit. This

is the only power that can make them and keep them steadfast in the right path....” *To be Like Jesus*, pg. 48.

God bless this contribution, and I hope it may assist in understanding that we are nothing before God, but by submitting our life to Him we are mighty. May the Lord bless you dear youth.

Jesus took human nature, passing through infancy, childhood, and youth, that He might know how to sympathize with all, and leave an example for all children and youth.



3. Control of the Appetite

Mihaja Razafimandimby, Madagascar

Madagascan Field Youth Leader

June 24, 2018 – Sunday

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31.

The lack of self control was the first sin

“Adam and Eve in Eden were noble in stature, and perfect in symmetry and beauty. They were sinless, and in perfect health. What a contrast to the human race now! Beauty is gone.... The beautiful Eve was beguiled by the serpent to eat of the fruit of the only tree of which God had forbidden them to eat, or even touch it, lest they die. Eve had everything to make her happy. She was surrounded by fruit of every variety. Yet the fruit of the forbidden tree appeared more desirable to her than the fruit of all the other trees in the garden of which she could freely eat. She was intemperate in her desires. She ate, and through her influence, her husband ate also, and a curse rested upon them both. The earth also was cursed because of their sin. And sin-

ce the fall, intemperance in almost every form has existed. The appetite has controlled reason.... The human family have violated the laws of health, and have run to excess in almost everything. Disease has been steadily increasing. The cause has been followed by the effect.” *Counsels on Diet and Food*, pg. 145.

The beginning of intemperance

“Satan gathered the fallen angels together to devise some way of doing the most possible evil to the human family. One proposition after another was made, till finally Satan himself thought of a plan. He would take the fruit of the vine, also wheat, and other things given by God as food, and would convert them into poisons, which would ruin man’s physical, mental, and moral powers,

and so overcome the senses that Satan should have full control....

“Satan has succeeded in turning the world from God. The blessings provided in God’s love and mercy he has turned into a deadly curse.” *Temperance*, pg. 12.

His most effective temptation today

“Satan comes to man, as he came to Christ, with his overpowering temptations to indulge appetite. He well knows his power to overcome man upon this point.... Indulgence of appetite was the foundation of all their sins. Through appetite, Satan controlled the mind and being.” *Temperance*, pgs. 13, 14.

Sodom and Gomorrah

“The gratification of unnatural appetite led to the sins that caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. God ascribes the fall of Babylon to her gluttony and drunkenness. Indulgence of appetite and passion was the foundation of all their sins.” *Counsels on Diet and Food*, pg. 147.

Esau conquered by

appetite

“Esau lusted for a favorite dish, and sacrificed his birthright to gratify appetite. After his lustful appetite had been gratified, he saw his folly, but found no space for repentance though he sought it carefully and with tears. There are very many who are like Esau. He represents a class who have a special, valuable blessing within their reach,—the immortal inheritance, life that is as enduring as the life of God, the Creator of the universe, happiness immeasurable, and an eternal weight of glory,—but who have so long indulged their appetites, passions, and inclinations, that their power to discern and appreciate the value of eternal things is weakened.” *Counsels on Diet and Food*, pg. 148.

Israel’s lust for flesh

“When the God of Israel brought His people out of Egypt, He withheld flesh meats from them in a great measure, but gave them bread from heaven, and water from the flinty rock. With this they were not satisfied. They loathed the food given them, and wished themselves back in Egypt, where they could sit by the fleshpots. They preferred to endure

slavery, and even death, rather than to be deprived of flesh. God granted their desire, giving them flesh, and leaving them to eat till their gluttony produced a plague, from which many of them died.” *Counsels on Diet and Food*, pg. 148.

The world today

“Crime and disease have increased with every succeeding generation. Intemperance in eating and drinking, and the indulgence of the baser passions, have benumbed the nobler faculties of man. Reason, instead of being the ruler, has come to be the slave of appetite to an alarming extent.... The present corrupt state of the world was presented before me. The sight was terrible. I have wondered that the inhabitants of the earth were not destroyed, like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.” *Counsels on Diet and Food*, pg. 149.

Christ’s victory in our behalf

“In the wilderness of temptation Christ met the great leading temptations that would assail man. There He encountered, single-han-

ded, the wily, subtle foe, and overcame him. The first great temptation was upon appetite; the second, presumption; the third, love of the world. Satan has overcome his millions by tempting them to the indulgence of appetite. Through the gratification of the taste, the nervous system becomes excited and the brain power enfeebled, making it impossible to think calmly or rationally. The mind is unbalanced. Its higher, nobler faculties are perverted to serve animal lust, and the sacred, eternal interests are not regarded. When this object is gained, Satan can come with his two other leading temptations and find ready access. His manifold temptations grow out of these three great leading points....

Through intemperance, Satan works to destroy the mental and moral powers that God gave to man as a priceless endowment. Thus it becomes impossible for men to appreciate things of eternal worth....

His example declares that our only hope of eternal life is through bringing the appetites and passions into subjection to the will of God.” *Counsels on Diet and Food*, pg. 151.

Victory in behalf of the race

“Satan was defeated in his object to overcome Christ upon the point of appetite. And here in the wilderness Christ achieved a victory in behalf of the race upon the point of appetite, making it possible for man, in all future time in His name to overcome the strength of appetite on his own behalf.” *Temperance*, pg. 20.

We too may overcome

“Our only hope of regaining Eden is through firm self-control. If the power of indulged appetite was so strong upon the race, that, in order to break its hold, the divine Son of God, in man’s behalf, had to endure a fast of nearly six weeks, what a work is before the Christian! Yet, however great the struggle, he may overcome. By the help of that divine power which withstood the fiercest temptations that Satan could invent, he, too, may be entirely successful in his warfare with evil, and at last may wear the victor’s crown in the kingdom of God.” *Temperance*, pg. 20.

Look to the Saviour

“In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us.... And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. ‘Be of good cheer,’ He says; ‘I have overcome the world.’”

“Let him who is struggling against the power of appetite, look to the Saviour in the wilderness of temptation. See Him in His agony upon the cross, as He exclaimed, “I thirst.” He has endured all that it is possible for us to bear. His victory is ours....

“God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pg. 152.

Daniel’s example of victory

“Temptations to the indulgence of appetite possess a power

which can be overcome only by the help that God can impart. But with every temptation we have the promise of God that there shall be a way of escape. Why, then, are so many overcome? It is because they do not put their trust in God. They do not avail themselves of the means provided for their safety. The excuses

offered for the gratification of perverted appetite, are therefore of no weight with God.

“Daniel valued his human capabilities, but he did not trust in them. His trust was in that strength which God has promised to all who will come to Him in humble dependence, relying wholly upon His



He purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank; for he knew that such a diet would not strengthen his physical powers or increase his mental capability.

power.

“He purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat, nor with the wine which he drank; for he knew that such a diet would not strengthen his physical powers or increase his mental capability. He would not use wine, nor any other unnatural stimulant; he would do nothing to becloud his mind; and God gave him ‘knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom,’ and also ‘understanding in all visions and dreams...’

“Daniel’s parents had trained him in his childhood to habits of strict temperance. They had taught him that he must conform to nature’s laws in all his habits; that his eating and drinking had a direct influence upon his physical, mental, and moral nature, and that he was accountable to God for his capabilities; for he held them all as a gift from God, and must not, by any course of action, dwarf or cripple them. As the result of this teaching, the law of God was exalted in his mind, and revered in his heart...

“The experience of Daniel and his youthful companions illustrates the benefits that may result

from an abstemious diet, and shows what God will do for those who will cooperate with Him in the purifying and uplifting of the soul. They were an honor to God, and a bright and shining light in the court of Babylon.

“In this history we hear the voice of God addressing us individually, bidding us gather up all the precious rays of light upon this subject of Christian temperance, and place ourselves in right relation to the laws of health.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pgs. 154, 155.

Our christian duty

“When we realize the requirements of God, we shall see that He requires us to be temperate in all things. The end of our creation is to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are His. How can we do this when we indulge the appetite to the injury of the physical and moral powers? God requires that we present our bodies a living sacrifice. Then the duty is enjoined on us to preserve that body in the very best condition of health, that we may comply with His requirements. “Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” *Counsels on Diet and*

Foods, pg. 155.

Will power

“God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God’s service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the

control of Christ.

“Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in the life. By yielding up the will to Christ, we ally ourselves with divine power. We receive strength from above to hold us steadfast. A pure and noble life, a life of victory over appetite and lust, is possible to everyone who will unite his weak, wavering human will to the omnipotent, unwavering will of God.” *The Ministry of Healing*, pg. 176.

Compilation from the writings of E. G. White

We are created for the purpose of glorifying God in our body and Spirit, which belong to Him.

4. The Weapon of Pride

Josué Fernando León, Italy

Youth Leader of the Italian Field

June 26, 2018 - Tuesday

Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. Habakkuk 2:4.

Hello dear youth, I hope that with the grace of God the next reading may help in your life and spiritual growth.

A problem for all

Pride is a problem present even among the best of us. It is the result of an ego hurt by someone who has trampled or offended our feelings, real or imagined.

Many times the problem will not be the failure of others, but having the ability to overcome our pride and forgive, no matter how grave the problem was. Pride is an evil, but it has an antidote, and this is forgiveness. The sooner we pronounce this word after a conflict or setback, the sooner we will be able to solve it, and its importance and seriousness will not be prolonged indefinitely, building up resentment and anger.

Too often when dominated by pride, we walk in paths that are completely different from our way of thinking or feeling; becoming deaf

to the voice of reason. Under the sedating effect of the wounded self, we make decisions where all the parties involved are losers.

So many times, it is pride that leads us to not be able to appreciate the work of others, to support what does not come from our hands or is part of our circle. Pride is the biggest bandage before our eyes that prevents us from seeing the qualities of others, especially if we have had any minor problem with them. Pride leads us to seek only that which bears our seal to be well known.

Pride makes us insensible

“One of our worst sins is pride... It affects the way we talk, the company with whom we associate, and even our appearance (the way we

dress). Pride fills the mind with ambition and resentment towards anyone who hinders us. Pride is always hinting in all our thoughts and desires. It even persecutes us in our studies.

“Pride makes us please our audience, seeking our own glory instead of the glory of God... It has the goal of impressing people with our eloquence, knowledge, sense of humor, piety, etc. Some Christians seem to think that the gifts that God has given them are to attract the admiration of people. If others have greater gifts than they, then they say that they are being ‘overvalued.’

“Some Christians are so zealous in maintaining their position that they try to do everything themselves, instead of seeking out assistance. This results in the gospel being discredited and in the pastoral carelessness of the people of God.

“Some believers think they are always right, even in the smallest details, and criticize anyone who dares to disagree with them. They reject the doctrine of papal infallibility, but it seems as if they aspire to be little popes.

“They set as a pretext that this is their zeal for the truth. But,

if this is so, then why do they get so angry when it is shown that they are wrong, and take it as if it were a personal insult? We tend to love those who are of our opinion and who help our cause... Some are so pompous that they are only capable of listening to compliments and praise.

“When we scold others for their sins... we hope they are grateful. But if we expose the sins of ministers, they react as if they were scandalously insulted... True piety cannot exist unless we hate our pride, lament it, and fight against it.

“Pride is the main characteristic of Satan. Those who oppose him the most should seem less so. In a believer humility is not an option, but an essential quality of the new nature. A proud believer is a contradiction in terms. Christ teaches us to be humble and meek.

“What do we have to be proud of? Our bodies? They will soon rot in the grave. Are we proud of our humility? This would be absurd. Are we proud of our knowledge? The more we know, the more we should recognize how ignorant we are. If it is our job to teach humility to others, should not we also practice it? People notice when Christians

are ambitious and love to have pre-eminence and authority over others. In discussions, ambitious believers do not want to listen to others, but only desire to impose their will. Arrogant people are the first to notice pride in others and the last to see pride in themselves. Let's be honest with ourselves. Can we really entrust humility to others, if we have very little of it?

“In fact, pride is worse than stealing or adulterating. Holiness means living for God and sin means living for oneself. **No one lives less for God and more for himself, except a proud man.**

“Therefore, be careful of yourself, and in all your studies, do not forget to study humility. I confess my own need to watch continuously. Remember God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

“**Almost everyone prefers a humble person to an arrogant person.** This is why proud men often claim to be humble. We must be very careful with pride, because no other sin is so ingrained in our nature and so difficult to overcome.” *Adapted from Richard Baxter's book, “The Reformed Pastor.”*

“There is so much truth in

these words! And how terrible this sin! The Spirit of Prophecy also speaks of the gravity of pride: “The sin that is most nearly hopeless and incurable is pride of opinion, self-conceit. This stands in the way of all growth.” *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 3, pg. 183.

“He knows that if man exalts himself, his ruin is just as certain as was his own.” *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pg. 294.

The enemy tries to reinforce in us the aspects of character that make us seem more like him, because the more we live for ourselves alone, the closer we come to our demise. When we are proud we are taking away from our brothers the love and appreciation that we should give them, instead we concentrate only on our person and do not recognize the qualities and abilities of others. It is as if we were robbing our brothers and our God.

Do you know the story of Zacchaeus?

According to the Bible, Zacchaeus—a small man—on the day that Jesus was passing by—due to his short stature—climbed a sycamore tree to

see the Savior. His effort did not go unnoticed by the Master and he called him to descend from there. (The story of Zacchaeus is usually known, otherwise I invite you to read it in Luke 19:1-9). Upon finding Jesus and accepting Him in his life, Zacchaeus pronounces the following

words: “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.” Luke 19:8. Zacchaeus knew he had stolen from his brothers. In his case it was money and property. By accepting Jesus, he decided to



Almost everyone prefers a humble person to an arrogant person.

make amends for his wrong by returning fourfold of the sum. Should not those then, who, victims of the sin of pride, have defrauded their brothers of the esteem due them surrender to their brothers fourfold?

Dear youth, the danger of falling into this pit of pride is very great and only with the help of the Holy Spirit can we be delivered. Jesus was also tempted by the enemy

on this point, but he stood firm and gained the victory. He wants to make you the winner. Do not hesitate to give your life to Him and He will guide you so that you too, like Zacchaeus, know how to live a life that does not feed self, but that lives to give himself to others.

This is my desire for you and for me. Amen.

In a believer humility is not an option, but an essential quality of the new nature.

5. The Love of the World

Jay Briones Suganob, Philippines

Philippine Union Youth Leader

June 27, 2018 - Wednesday

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 1 John 2:15.

The world and its pleasures

The third weapon wielded by Satan in which man may fall in the war against evil is the love of the world. The biblical invitation not to love the world nor the things that are therein is clear (1 John 2:15-16). Jesus was tempted by the devil in this way: “And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, ‘All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.’ And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Luke 4:5-8.

“It is Satan’s policy to manufacture an abundance of [worldly pleasures]. He seeks to fill the minds of men with a desire for worldly amusement, that they may have no time to ask themselves the question, ‘How is it with my soul?’ The love of pleasure is infectious. Given up to this, the mind hurries from one point to another, ever seeking for some amusement. Obedience to the law of God counteracts this inclination, and builds barriers against ungodliness.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pg. 337.

The devil appeared and showed Him the world and its pleasures, but Christ refused, for He knew that everything in this world, the desires of the flesh and all its pleasures are like the blooming rose that shows its beauty, but will not last long; it will pass and only the Word of God will remain (1 John 2:16).

“Lot chose Sodom as a place of residence because he looked more to the temporal advantages he would gain than to the moral influences that would surround himself and his family. What did he gain so far as the things of this world are concerned? His possessions were destroyed, part of his children perished in the destruction of that wicked city, his wife was turned to a pillar of salt by the way, and he himself was saved ‘so as by fire.’ Nor did the evil results of his selfish choice end here; but the moral corruption of the place was so interwoven with the character of his children that they could not distinguish between good and evil, sin and righteousness.” *Messages to Young People*, pg. 419.

“Cares, riches, pleasures, all are used by Satan in playing the game of life for the human soul. The warning is given, ‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.’ 1 John 2:15, 16. He who reads the hearts of men as an open book says, ‘Take heed to your-

selfes, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.’ Luke 21:34. And the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit writes, ‘They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.’ 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 55.

The desire for worldly satisfaction

The prodigal son threw himself into the pleasures of the world, believing he had found the satisfaction he desired. The younger son asked his father for the portion of goods that falleth to him. Not many days after the younger son gathered it altogether, he took his journey into a far country, and there squandered his sustenance with riotous living. He joined with his worldly friends, ate with them, drank with them, traveling from place to place seeking for worldly pleasures, satisfying his lust with vicious amusement, until

he had spent the last penny of his inheritance.

He begun to suffer hunger, but none of his friends arrived to give him food. All of his friends were there for him when he was able to satisfy their pleasures. But when he had spent all of his resources, all of his friends were gone away, and all of his pleasures were over. He began to ponder over how he could find something to eat. Then he begun to look for a job. He went and joined with a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and not one of his friends he had fed before gave unto him. Bitterly, he had to admit that none of those things satisfy forever. One day they will pass, but whoever does God's will remains forever. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" Ecclesiastes 1:2, 3. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16:26. The world may satisfy what your flesh desires, but that may come at the

price of your soul, for only God can satisfy your soul.

"What a picture here of the sinner's state! Although surrounded with the blessings of His love, there is nothing that the sinner, bent on self-indulgence and sinful pleasure, desires so much as separation from God. Like the ungrateful son, he claims the good things of God as his by right. He takes them as a matter of course, and makes no return of gratitude, renders no service of love. As Cain went out from the presence of the Lord to seek his home; as the prodigal wandered into the 'far country,' so do sinners seek happiness in forgetfulness of God (Romans 1:28)." *Christ's Object Lessons*, pg. 200.

Awakening to the true condition

It is in the time of trials that God can help those, who in the state of losing themselves may come to realize their true condition. God has endowed us with different talents and he requires us to use them for His glory. Money is one of the God-given talents and this to be used for His glory. God is not pleased, when in like manner as the prodigal

son, it is used for self-gratification. It was for that reason that he fell into despondency.

“The love of God still yearns over the one who has chosen to separate from Him, and He sets in operation influences to bring him back to the Father’s house. The prodigal son in his wretchedness ‘came to himself.’ The deceptive power that Satan had exercised over him was broken. He saw that his suffering was the result of his own folly, and he said, ‘How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father.’ Miserable as he was, the prodigal found hope in the conviction of his father’s love. It was that love which was drawing him toward home. So it is the assurance of God’s love that constrains the sinner to return to God. ‘The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.’ Romans 2:4.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pg. 202.

Making the right decision

“I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.” Luke 15:18. God cannot

lead people of an indecisive mind. It is clearly stated in the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, “Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts...” Hebrews 3:7, 8. God urges us to make the right decision without delay. Take a stand for the Lord and you will see how God works in your behalf, for as you are willing to go back to Him, He is more than willing to receive you.

In making a decision, you have two options. As the prodigal is after a complete realization of his debased condition—he decided to leave what he has and turn to his father—in like manner, we need also to make a decision to leave our present condition—as we have gone away from our Heavenly Father choosing the world and its pleasures—and return to Him. He is waiting to receive us with open arms, for we are all His prodigal sons and daughters. He loves us and has long awaited our return. “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isaiah 1:18.

Taking action, an absolute necessity

“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” Luke 15:20.

“The son determines to confess his guilt. He will go to his father, saying, ‘I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.’ But he adds, showing how stunted is his conception of his father’s love, ‘Make me as one of thy hired servants.’

“The young man turns from the swine herds and the husks, and sets his face toward home. Trembling with weakness and faint from hunger, he presses eagerly on his way. He has no covering to conceal his rags; but his misery has conquered pride, and he hurries on to beg a servant’s place where he was once a child.

“Little did the gay, thoughtless youth, as he went out from his father’s gate, dream of the ache and longing left in that father’s heart. When he danced and feasted with his wild companions, little did he

think of the shadow that had fallen on his home. And now as with weary and painful steps he pursues the homeward way, he knows not that one is watching for his return. But while he is yet ‘a great way off’ the father discerns his form. Love is of quick sight. Not even the degradation of the years of sin can conceal the son from the father’s eyes. He ‘had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck’ in a long, clinging, tender embrace.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pgs. 202, 203.

An appeal to the youth

Queridos jóvenes, nuestro Padre cDear young people, our heavenly Father loves you, and he wants you also to love Him rather than the world. He desires the youth be His representatives in this sinful world, as supposed to lovers of it. But how many of our youth have wandered away from our heavenly Father as the prodigal son wandered away from his father? How many of the youth have loved the world and the things therein rather than our heavenly Father? How many have wasted their God-given blessings in self-gratification instead of glorifying the giver? How many have been allured by

Satan with the things of this world, the lust of this world, and led them to turn away from God? Some choose their profession over God, others choose to have a relationship with an unbeliever, others choose worldly business, and others worldly pleasures. The Lord is calling you dear youth, to amend your ways. "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." Jeremiah 7:3.

In this Youth Revival Week, may our young people take time self-examine their own condition, make a

decision, and turn to our heavenly Father, to take part of His abundant love, mercy, and righteousness. He is waiting for you to return, He is more than willing to receive you with open arms and to forgive, for you are His prodigal child. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18. Amen.



... Everything in this world, the desires of the flesh and all its pleasures are like the blooming rose that shows its beauty, but will not last long; it will pass and only the Word of God will remain.

6. The Condemnation of the Devil

Hazael Jonathan Rodríguez, Mexico

Mexican Union Youth Leader

June 29, 2018 – Friday

The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the grey head. Proverbs 20:29.

As a child, I remember seeing him among the youth of the church. He always won all of the games. He was the most skillful, the fastest, the most agile. Seeing him play basketball, as he reached for the ball in the air, it was to me as if he were flying. I wanted to have those abilities. The word of God teaches us that “glory of young men is their strength.” Another translation interprets this text as follows, “the young man is admired for his strength.” It is the stage in which we do not grow weary, there are no limits. There is nothing that can stop you from making this time the best of your life, with eternal results.

God has endowed the human being with capacities that surprise science, and it is in youth when those capacities are at their greatest level; the use you give them depends on the utility you have in this life

and the one to come. Ecclesiastes 12:14 says: “For God shall bring every work into judgment...” The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, “... that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God...” 1 Timothy 3:15. Have you thought how to use that strength, skill, and youthful vigor that you have to give God a better service? Paul reminded Timothy that he should be an “example” and urged him “not to neglect the gift” that was in him. God will ask for an account of the gifts he has given us. Just remember the parable of talents mentioned in Matthew 25. But what is it that makes the youth neglect the gift that is in him? 1 Peter 5:8 gives us the answer: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

A conquered enemy wants to defeat you

Before man was created there was a rebellion in heaven, an exalted angel (cherub) and perfect being, who was the greatest only after the Godhead, rebelled (Ezequiel 28:14-18). "... Next to Christ, had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. Lucifer, 'son of the morning,' was first of the covering cherubs, holy and undefiled." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pg. 35.

His intent was to be equal to God: "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Isaiah 14:13, 14.

"To dispute the supremacy of the Son of God, thus impeaching the wisdom and love of the Creator, had become the purpose of this prince of angels. To this object he was about to bend the energies of that master mind, which, next to Christ's, was first among the hosts of God. But He who would have

the will of all His creatures free, left none unguarded to the bewildering sophistry by which rebellion would seek to justify itself. Before the great contest should open, all were to have a clear presentation of His will, whose wisdom and goodness were the spring of all their joy." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pg. 36.

The Word of God teaches us that this being did not prevail in heaven, being that there was a war. "And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Revelation 12:8, 9.

Our heavenly Father, putting into action the plan of creating man, made him perfect (Ecclesiastes 7:29), adorned him with wonderful talents and abilities; he was made a little less than the angels. "As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator he was of noble height and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was

neither white nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble, perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful.” *The Story of Redemption*, pg. 20.

“God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. It was God’s purpose to repopulate heaven with the human family.” *The Truth About Angels*, pg. 48.

“The vacancies made in heaven by the fall of Satan and his angels will be filled by the redeemed of the Lord.” *The Review and Herald*, May 29, 1900.

The plan was drawn, human beings would occupy the vacancies that Satan and his angels left in heaven, but that conflict that started there would be transferred to the earth. Now our enemy, which is already defeated, also has plans for you dear youth, but they are not the same that God has. Satan wants to fill life with misery, but he presents before us an attractive, pleasant and interesting picture, “but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 16:25.

“After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. He declared that men had chosen him as their sovereign. Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world.” *The Desire of Ages*, pg. 114.

“When Satan was triumphing as the prince of the world, when he claimed the world as his kingdom, when we were all marred and corrupted with sin, God sent His messenger from heaven, even His only begotten Son, to proclaim to all the inhabitants of the world, ‘I have found a ransom. I have made a way of escape for all the perishing. I have your emancipation papers provided for you, sealed by the Lord of heaven and earth.’” *Our High Calling*, pg. 38.

What joy and blessing, that our Lord Jesus Christ came to seek and save that which was lost, paid the price of our redemption. By his wounds we were healed and again Satan was defeated on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus announced that Satan

would not cease his battle against the human race: “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Revelation 12:12.

This is why he walks like a roaring lion; he knows you and knows what your weaknesses are and prepares exclusive temptations for each young man and woman. He wants to win your heart and your affections, dear youth. He presents the pleasures of the world in an attractive fashion.

“There is work, earnest work, to be done for the Master. The evils condemned in God’s word, must be overcome. You must individually battle against the world, the flesh and the devil. The word of God is called “the sword of the Spirit,” and you should become skillful in its use, if you would cut your way through the hosts of opposition and darkness.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pg. 124.

A battle on the verge of ending

“The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has

been carried forward for nearly six thousand years, is soon to close; and the wicked one redoubles his efforts to defeat the work of Christ in man’s behalf, and to fasten souls in his snares. To hold the people in darkness and impenitence till the Saviour’s mediation is ended, and there is no longer a sacrifice for sin, is the object which he seeks to accomplish.” *The Great Controversy*, pg. 518.

In the typical rite on the day of atonement, the high priest performed a symbolic act of judgment that is taking place in the heavenly sanctuary. On this occasion two goats were brought to the sanctuary (Leviticus 16:5) and Aaron cast lots on the two goats; one lot for Jehovah, and another for Azazel (Leviticus 16:8). The goat that was for Jehovah was sacrificed for the forgiveness of sins, to make atonement for the sins of the people. In like manner, Jesus our Savior, is now doing the purification of the sanctuary, erasing our sins that Satan lead us to commit.

“And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat,

and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.” Leviticus 16:20-22.

“At the door of the tabernacle he laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat [symbol of Azazel] and confessed over him ‘all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.’ And as the goat bearing these sins was sent away, they were, with him, regarded as forever separated from the people. Such was the service performed ‘unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.’ Hebrews 8:5.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 356.

“Now the event takes place, foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the day of atonement. When the ministration in the holy of holies had been completed, and the sins of Israel had been removed from the sanctuary by virtue of the blood of

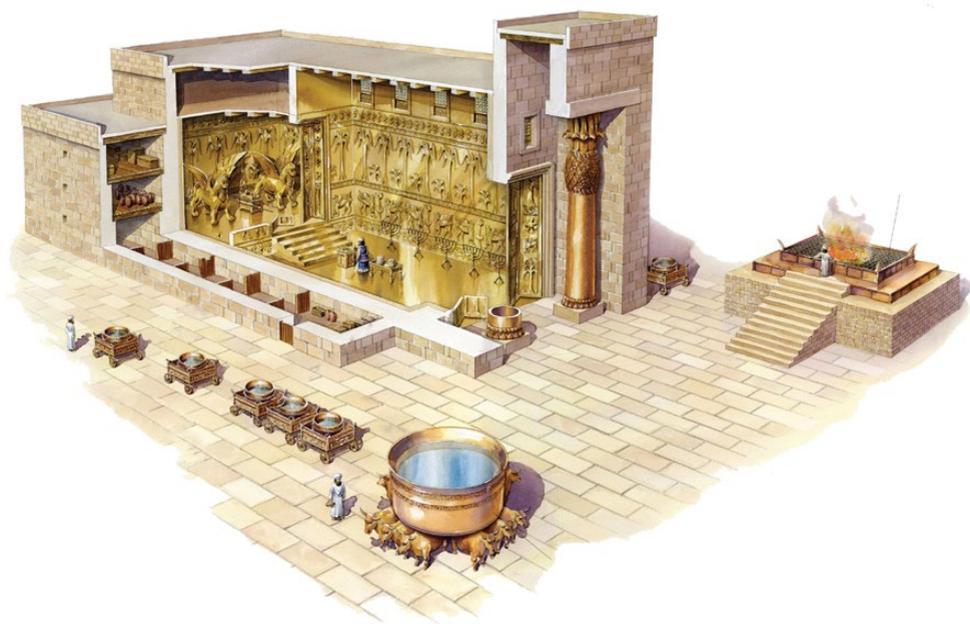
the sin-offering, then the scape-goat was presented alive before the Lord; and in presence of the congregation of high priest confessed over him “all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.” Leviticus 16:21. In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels, and the host of the redeemed, the sins of God’s people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scape-goat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.” *The Great Controversy*, pg. 657.

In this way the Devil will be condemned. Do not let this fallen angel be a stumbling block for you. God has great plans for you dear youth. “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” Jeremiah 29:11. God wants to give you that future full of hope. Dedicate your youthful strength and life to God.

One day Satan will be eliminated forever, the sins of the sanctuary will be eradicated, and sin will no longer exist in the universe. All the wicked, who with Christ's help do not overcome sin, will be destroyed together with the devil. Now is the time to seek atonement for our sins, repent

of them, and establish ourselves in harmony with God. Only then will we overcome, and the one who overcomes will be a pillar in the temple of God (Revelation 3:12).

“For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth.” Psalm 71:5.



He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. Revelation 3:12.

7. More Than Overcomers

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June 30, 2018 - Saturday

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Romans 8:37.

Overcoming, winning, triumphing... are very attractive and inspiring terms that everyone uses or listens to, because they are related to success in life, reaching the summit, standing out from the crowd, realizing our dreams and aspirations, the attainment of what we yearn. We all like to succeed in life, but have you ever wondered, dear youth, if you are correctly aiming the dart of your effort at the correct target? Have you reflected on what is most important in this life? It is control of your character.

The introductory text mentions winning, but what exactly? The answer is found in the context; winning in the fight against evil. Conquering our own character is more important than conquering an empire. We already know that those great conquerors who managed to subdue many other nations, did not manage

to dominate themselves, as shown by the fact that many of them died as a result of excess in eating, drinking, sex, etc. Alexander the Great, in only 13 years, became the architect of one of the greatest empires known to mankind. But twelve days before his death, Alexander partook in a banquet where he became inebriated by drinking a chalice in honor of Hercules, that contained several liters of alcohol. Alexander fell seriously ill as a result of this and days later died in the prime of his life. He was 33 years old. He had conquered the world but could not conquer himself.

Temperament, character, and personality

We are not born with a formed character, we must cultivate it during our life, hence it is said that

each one is an architect of his own character and therefore of his destiny. Temperament is a genetic inheritance, it is part of our inherited constitution. That is why each one is as he is: some gravitate to sadness, melancholy, others are cheerful, talkative, others are introverted, timid, etc. The temperament cannot be changed, although it can be modified and controlled. Recall the case of the apostle Peter who was impulsive by nature; he liked to figure, to stand out, to speak more than anyone...

History tells us that “Luther was ardent and zealous, fearless and bold in reproving sin, and advocating the truth... and at times might go too far; but God raised up Melancthon, who was just the opposite in character, to aid Luther, and carry on the work of reformation.” Ellen G. White in *Europe 1885-1887*, pg. 259. These respective traits punctuate the temperaments that each reformer had inherited.

“Some have had a quick temper transmitted to them, and their education in childhood has not taught them self-control. With this fiery temper, envy and jealousy are frequently united.” *Mind, Character,*

and Personality, vol. 1, pg. 149.

We will not go into detail about definitions, but much has been said about temperament, character, and personality. We will focus on the fact that both character and personality are built during life and influence the attainment of the family, social, cultural, work, and ecclesiastical environment. The decisions that are made, the thoughts amassed, the customs acquired, the prenatal influence, the inherited and cultivated temperament; all this exerts a weight on the individual. Each one of us is different, there is none alike to the other. There are traits can link us more with some than with others, the genetic code is received by all and influences the constitution and way of being of the individual. Yet we must understand that character and personality are modifiable.

Prenatal and environmental influences

Hopefully every father and mother understand this matter correctly. Their lives are not an island in which they are born, grow, and die alone. Their children and the

children of their children receive influences that condition their lives. Future generations will receive a legacy for good or for evil. What the mother and father are have a powerful influence on the child. The inspired pen says: "If she allows her mind to dwell upon her own feelings, if she indulges in selfishness, if she is peevish and exacting, the disposition of her child will testify to the fact. Thus many have received as a birthright almost unconquerable tendencies to evil." *Temperance*, pg. 171. "The basis of a right character in the future man is made firm by habits of strict temperance in the mother prior to the birth of her child.... This lesson should not be regarded with indifference." *The Adventist Home*, pg. 258. "Both parents transmit their own characteristics, mental and physical, their dispositions and appetites, to their children... And as the children have less power to resist temptation than had the parents, the tendency is for each generation to fall lower and lower." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pg. 561.

Parents have a great responsibility. Dear youth, you must think about this. To marry is not only to join a person, it is to program the life

to live in harmony with God and with the spouse, and to prepare the offspring to serve and love the Creator. In this way, children are given a temperament that will help them form a symmetrical character. "Parents should remember that their children must encounter these temptations. Even before the birth of the child, the preparation should begin that will enable it to fight successfully the battle against evil." *The Ministry of Healing*, pg. 371.

The environment in which we live also affects us. It is true that the final decision is ours, but it will be much easier to favor good traits of character if the companies we hold and the environment in which we live are conducive to seeking and loving God. Let's remember the case of Lot: "The sinful conduct of his daughters was the result of the evil associations of that vile place. [Sodom's] moral corruption had become so interwoven with their character that they could not distinguish between good and evil. Lot's only posterity, the Moabites and Ammonites, were vile, idolatrous tribes, rebels against God and bitter enemies of His people." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pg. 167.

Overcoming sin

When we study this subject, we can fall into discouragement if we do not cling to divine promises and guidelines. Millions of people have been born and raised in dysfunctional homes. They are dragging inherited and cultivated tendencies, as well as their sinful nature which conditions them (Romans 7:19). It is not easy to change the course of a life, in fact, it is not possible without the help of God. And this is where we want to affirm that there is hope for all, that nobody needs to despair: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10.

To end this conference, I want to share with you dear youth, some biblical texts and testimonies that help us understand that the defects received from our ancestors can be overcome through the imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ. He invites each one of us to approach the throne of grace to obtain timely relief: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the

throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:15, 16.

By embracing biblical truth, each young person is taken to the field where they have freedom from sin, because faith comes from hearing the Word of God: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32.

No youth is left alone in his struggle against his inherited or acquired tendencies. God invites us to resist in the fight against evil: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7.

God is the one who gives us both the will and the ability to do (Philippians 2:13). In the fight against bad tendencies, the Spirit of God generates in us its fruits that lead us to victory: “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7.

How can we sink our face in our hands, crying inconsolably over our weaknesses? “I will arise and go to my father” (Luke 15:18), exclaimed the prodigal son. Let’s do the same! Let us abandon our spiritual lethargy by the grace of Christ. In Christ there is power: “Ye are of

God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” 1 John 4:4. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” Ephesians 6:10.

We have the promise from Christ that we will obtain victory over our sins: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” Philippians 1:6.

“And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. ‘Be of good cheer,’ He says; ‘I have overcome the world.’ John 16:33.” *The Desire of Ages*, pg. 122.

“A genuine conversion changes hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong. The religion of God is a firm fabric, composed of innumerable threads and woven together with tact and skill. Only the wisdom which comes from God can

make this fabric complete.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, pg. 145.

“The question for us to consider is, Have we the attributes of Christ? Excuses are valueless. All circumstances, all appetites and passions, are to be servants to the God-fearing man, not rulers over him. The Christian is not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habits or tendency.” *Testimonies for Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pg. 421.

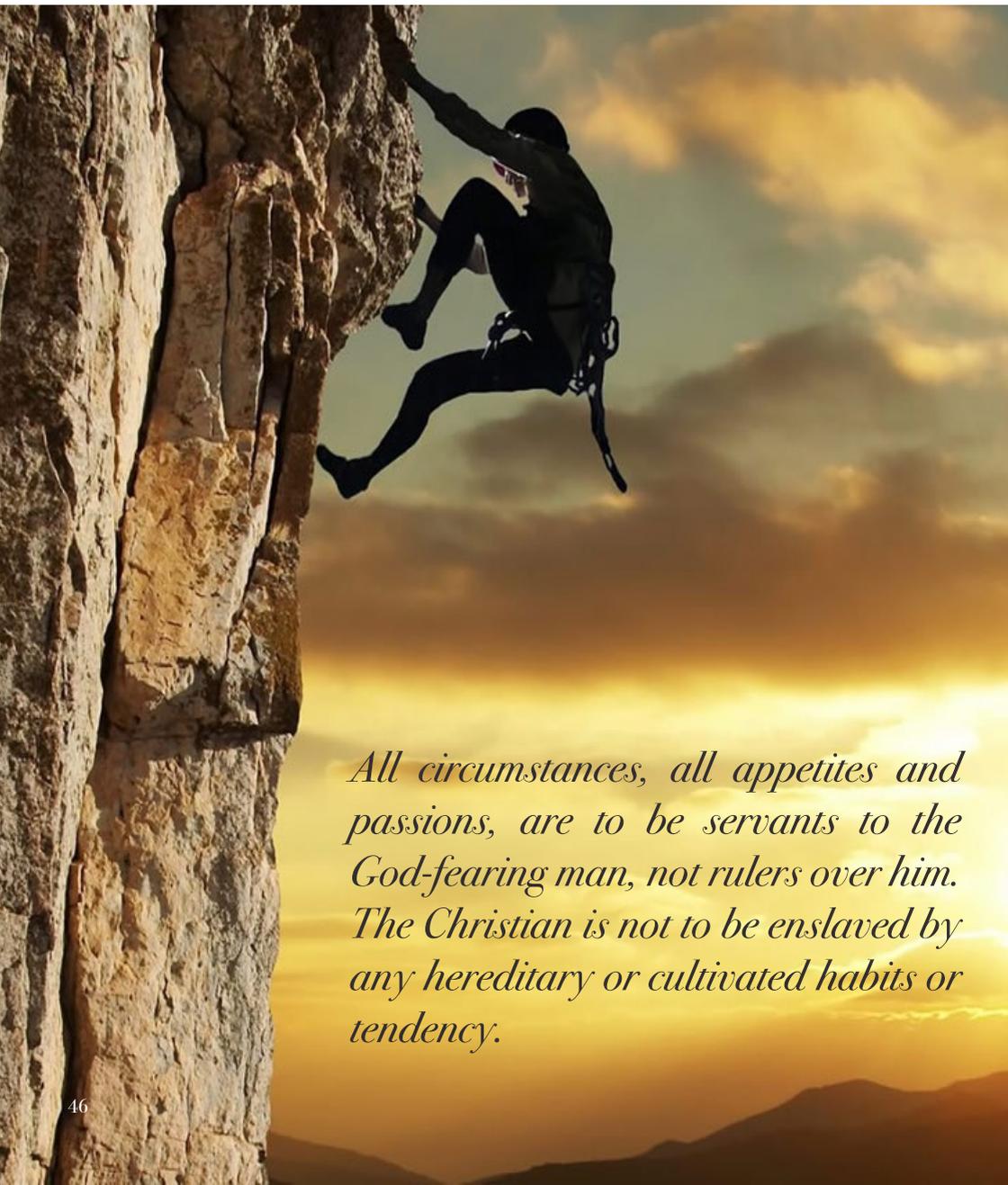
“Angels are ever present where they are most needed. They are with those who have the hardest battles to fight, with those who must battle against inclination and hereditary tendencies, whose home surroundings are the most discouraging.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, pg. 146).

Conclusion

Dear youth, I encourage you to continue forward in the race of faith without losing heart, without being discouraged. The Lord has power to offer to those who wish to grab on to His hand. There is no situation, however complex, that prevents us from forming a character

for eternity. The victory is ours if we let the Spirit of God guide us. I invite you to reflect on what is exhibi-

ted here. May God bless you richly. Your brother and colaborer. Amen.



All circumstances, all appetites and passions, are to be servants to the God-fearing man, not rulers over him. The Christian is not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habits or tendency.

“To him who
overcomes I
will grant to sit
with Me on My
throne, as I also
overcame and
sat down with
My Father on
His throne.”
Apocalipsis 3:21

