

# Day of Prayer and Fasting

*Handbook and Resources*

## **Sharing Three Final Messages of Love**

*as We Pray for Righteousness by Faith*

Fourth Quarter 2021

Sabbath, October 2

*Revival*  
& REFORMATION

Prepared for church group and individual use by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in coordination with the Revival and Reformation Committee. Written by Melody Mason for the Day of Prayer and Fasting global initiative.

Visit [www.revivalandreformation.org](http://www.revivalandreformation.org) for information.

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# An Invitation to Fast and Pray

If ever there was a time in history that we should be urgently sharing God's three final messages of love with the world, it is now. Our world is in crisis. Confusion abounds and people are searching for answers. Spiritual delusions are leading multitudes astray. Now, as never before, it's time to study God's Word so we can rise up and share the vital messages of hope and love found in Revelation 14. This is our most important message!

Ellen White writes, "In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchman and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19).

It's time to ask ourselves if the beauty and relevancy of the three angels' messages have touched our lives in such a way that we are compelled to share these messages with others. If not, perhaps we need to see these special messages with new eyes.

Recognizing our urgent need to be personally changed, and sensing our desperate need of the Holy Spirit so we can share the good news with others, we invite you to join our church family for a special day of prayer and fasting. Our theme is "Sharing Three Final Messages of Love as We Pray for Righteousness by Faith." Our prayers will focus on heart needs: praying to understand Bible truth in a fresh way, to grow faith for the hard times, and to gain Holy Spirit power to witness and share.

Why is this day of prayer accompanied by fasting?

We fast because we are in earnest for God's blessing. When we read the Bible, we see that fasting is not an option. It's a given. Matthew 6:17 doesn't say, "If you fast," but rather, "When you fast." If we study all the fasts in the Bible, we find that every time God's people prayed *and fasted*, God worked mightily on their behalf—from deliverance from enemies in battle to supernatural deliverance from prison to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we see a pattern. This pattern repeats itself all throughout Christian history. Fasting has always been part of believers' lifestyle, just like prayer and Bible study. In fact, every major character in the Bible fasted.

We are told, "Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should *set aside days for fasting and prayer*. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food" (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 188, 189, emphasis supplied).

Fasting is more than just skipping meals. Fasting is choosing to do without something in order to pray more intentionally and with more heart and soul focus. Many choose to skip meals, but not everyone can do without food completely, and not everyone chooses this type of fast. That's okay. We encourage you to pray and ask God what type of fast He wants you to do. You might choose to eat more simply, or you might choose to fast from social media, television, or other time-consuming habits. Whatever you do, it's important to remember that fasting isn't about earning a heavenly reward. The main point of fasting is removing distractions so we can seek Jesus more wholeheartedly. As Derek Morris, president of Hope Channel, likes to say, "We fast from the world so we can feast on Jesus."

We invite you to be part of this special day! Whether you choose to fast or not, we believe God has a special blessing in store for you.

Perhaps you are wary of corporate prayer because you don't like to pray aloud. We invite you to join anyway. You can pray along with others silently, lifting up the prayer requests of others and praying for the people and things God brings to your heart. And if you fear that your prayers aren't "good enough,"

know that God hears not only our words but also our hearts. He's not looking for "good enough" prayers but for sincere worshippers seeking Him. Even if we don't know what to pray, He knows. He hears. And He invites us to pray *together*. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19).

Hebrews 10:24, 25 says, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

The Day is approaching. Now is the time to share God's final messages of hope and salvation! We must not delay. Don't miss the storehouse of blessings God has for you as we come together to fast and pray.

# Instructions for Leaders

- Distribute the handout “An Invitation to Fast and Pray” to church members at least a week or two before this special day so members can prepare.
- Instead of including a full sermon, we are providing material to help local leaders prepare a sermon. A Sabbath morning church service that focuses on this quarter’s prayer theme may inspire more members to join in your afternoon prayer time.
- A children’s story is included to help children understand the three angels’ messages. It’s more of a short teaching session than a typical story, so you might need to use your creativity to engage the children. You could even turn the information into a skit.
- A devotional reading for the afternoon prayer program, “Three Messages of Love and a Revival of Genuine Godliness,” is provided. This devotional reading should be followed by a corporate prayer time.
- We encourage you to pray together as a group for the united prayer focus, centering on the first, second, and third angels’ message. A handout is provided for this. Take time to plead for the promised latter rain and an understanding of righteousness by faith. If you have time, you might allow the group to divide into smaller groups for more personal requests. You can do “breakout rooms” in Zoom for the small group time, if meeting online. Bring the group back together to close with a time of thanksgiving.
- We recommend scheduling a minimum of 2-3 hours for this afternoon prayer program; many plan to pray together for a full afternoon, however. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead.
- Print or e-mail participants the handouts “Prayer Focus” and “Powerful Prayer Promises” for the afternoon prayer time.
- If you have questions about how to lead a united prayer group, see instructions in the “Suggested Afternoon Program.”

# Suggested Sabbath Morning Program

## Suggested Order of Divine Worship Service

Day of Prayer and Fasting, October 2, 2021

Prelude

Platform participants enter

Doxology

Invocation

Offertory

Offering Response

Offertory Prayer

Hymn: "Give Me the Bible" (SDA Hymnal #272)

Children's Story: "Three Angels of Love"

Scripture Reading: Revelation 14:4; Deuteronomy 30:20

*"These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (Rev. 14:4).*

*"That you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days" (Deut. 30:20).*

Intercessory Prayer

Special Music

SERMON: "Sharing Three Final Messages of Love as We Pray for Righteousness by Faith"

Closing Hymn: "Jesus is Coming Again" (SDA Hymnal #213)

Benediction and Announcement of Details for Afternoon Prayer Program

Postlude

# Suggested Afternoon Program

**Place:** Gather in the sanctuary, outside under some trees, or, if your group is small, meet in a comfortable room in someone's home that offers privacy and no distractions. If meeting in person is not permissible, Zoom is an online video conferencing service that might be an option for you (zoom.us). You can also meet by phone.

**Opening Praise and Worship (15-20 minutes):** Music always sets the mood for worship, so begin with a few songs of worship to inspire reverence and encourage seeking after God.

Maybe invite a few members to share 30-second testimonies of answered prayers or praises to God between songs.

**Welcome and Announcements:** The leader should welcome people and share an idea of the flow of the afternoon.

**Opening Prayer:** Designate a person

**Share the Devotional:** Have someone share the devotional, "Three Messages of Love and a Revival of Genuine Godliness."

**United Prayer Leader:** The following instructions should be shared briefly before prayer time.

- We are here to pray as a family. Remember that everything shared is confidential.
- We won't be taking prayer requests ahead of time. The devil loves it when we talk about our requests instead of praying about them. We will simply pray and agree with one another in prayer.
- Please be comfortable during the prayer time. If meeting together in person, feel free to change positions—sitting, kneeling, standing, etc. If on Zoom, you might consider turning off the camera during prayer for fewer distractions.
- Speak up so we can hear you, or be sure to unmute your microphone if on Zoom.
- Claim scripture and pray God's promises back to Him. (Use the provided promise sheet.)
- Claim the righteous life, sacrifice, and ministry of Jesus in prayer (John 14:14; Rev.8:3).
- **Keep prayers brief** (a single thought, or 1-2 sentences). Save lengthy prayers for the prayer closet. People tend to grow weary with long prayers. We are told the angels grow weary, too (*Prayer*, p. 258).
- People can pray multiple times (briefly) during corporate prayer times.
- Last but not least, please allow everyone an opportunity to speak up and pray without one person dominating the prayer time.

**NOTE TO PRAYER LEADER:** Remember that silence in prayer time is fine. Don't feel the need to fill every silent moment or end the prayer time prematurely. While some people jump in and pray quickly, others take longer to feel comfortable praying aloud. When silence happens, let it linger. Allow God to speak silently to hearts.



If your congregation isn't used to praying together in groups and including scripture and singing during the prayer time, you should lead by example.

If you are concerned because you've never led united prayer before, you can learn more by reading *Praying for Rain: A Mini-Handbook for United Prayer*. It can be found online here: <https://www.revivalandreformation.org/resources/all/praying-for-rain>.

## Time to Begin!

**Corporate Prayer Time:** Take 2-3 hours for corporate and small-group prayer, or longer as the Holy Spirit leads. We encourage you to follow the "Prayer Focus" themes included in these materials, and intermingle other prayers as the Holy Spirit leads. After you've prayed about greater understanding and awareness of the three angels' messages, pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and righteousness by faith. No prayer focus sheet is supplied for these last two. If you have time, feel free to break into smaller groups for personal prayer requests.

### **A Time of Praise & Worship (Corporate Prayer Time)**

The prayer focus might help the prayers get going, but it's not just to read. Encourage people to pray the specific prayers that touch their hearts. Pray from the heart. Those are the prayers that God truly loves to hear.

### **Praying for God's Glory (Corporate Prayer Time—See Love Letter 1)**

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:6, 7, KJV).

### **Praying to Come Out of Babylon and Back to the Bible (Corporate Prayer Time—See Love Letter 2)**

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Rev. 14:8, KJV).

### **Praying for Loyalty and Obedience to God (Corporate Prayer Time—See Love Letter 3)**

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Rev. 14:9-11, KJV).

### **Praying for the Holy Spirit to be Poured Out (Corporate Prayer Time)**

We desperately need the latter rain power promised in Joel 2:28. Pray for this as a group, claiming the promises in the "Powerful Prayer Promises" handout.

### **Praying for Righteousness by Faith (Corporate Prayer Time)**

We desperately need to understand righteousness by faith as it is tied to the three angels' messages. Once again, claim the promises in the handout.

**Praying for Loved Ones and Personal Needs (Small Groups)**

Divide into small groups to pray for personal needs.

**Close with Praise (Corporate Prayer Time)**

Close the prayer time with corporate praise. Worship God and thank Him, not just for what He's already done, but for what He's going to do.

**Encouragement:** After the prayer time ends, encourage people to keep praying for one another, or to set up small prayer groups in their homes if they haven't already. (If members would like to join daily united prayer calls happening in their part of the world, encourage them to learn about *24/7 United Prayer*. More information can be found online: [revivalandreformation.org/resources/all/join-us-for-24/7-united-prayer](http://revivalandreformation.org/resources/all/join-us-for-24/7-united-prayer).)

**Break the Sabbath Fast with a Special Evening Meal:** Some churches may choose to have a meal together after the prayer time to break the fast. Keep the meal simple but make the food and atmosphere attractive to create a special occasion. If social distancing prohibits this, do a "praise picnic." Take turns sharing praises and more testimonies of answered prayer, even if it's over Zoom.

## The Day the Potatoes Preached

[Suggested props: a potato and three angel pictures or paper angels. This story can be simplified for younger children.]

Do you like potatoes? What is your favorite way to eat potatoes?

I have a funny question for you. Did you know that potatoes can preach?

Preachers don't always stand behind a pulpit to preach, and God can use anything to share His Word—even potatoes.

Leonard Hastings was not a preacher. He was a farmer, and in the spring of 1844 he planted a field of potatoes. But that summer something happened that completely changed him. Leonard learned about Jesus' soon coming from a man named William Miller. Based on Bible prophecy in Daniel, chapter 8, William Miller preached that Jesus was coming back to earth on October 22, 1844.

Meanwhile, the potatoes were almost ready for harvest. But Leonard felt that with Jesus coming in a few more weeks, he wouldn't be needing the potatoes and decided not to harvest them. Word got around that he wasn't digging up his potatoes because he believed Jesus was coming. Everyone knew that the potatoes would rot in the ground if they were not harvested.

When Jesus didn't come on October 22, the neighbors had a good laugh at Leonard and wondered what his family would be eating. Leonard left his potatoes in the ground until November. When he finally did dig them out, he found that they were some of the best that he had ever grown!

Things didn't go as well for his neighbors. A potato disease came to the area that year and rotted nearly all the potatoes that had been dug at the proper time. Leonard had a large supply of potatoes for his family, and he was able to share with the neighbors who had laughed at him.

The next spring, when it was time to plant potatoes again, people from far and near came to buy seed potatoes from him. By this time, he was able to share with others *why* Jesus hadn't come back on October 22, 1844. He now knew that the preacher William Miller had been right about the time but wrong about what was supposed to happen on that day.

As Leonard sold his potatoes, he explained: Jesus, our High Priest, had entered into the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary in heaven on that day. It was there that He would do the final work of bringing an end to sin. And *then* He would come back to earth!

Well, it's been more than 150 years since those potatoes helped Leonard preach a sermon to his neighbors. And even though Jesus didn't come back in 1844, the Bible tells us that Jesus' work in the heavenly sanctuary is almost finished! His coming is very near. In fact, God sent three angels with a special message of love to help us prepare for Jesus' soon coming. You can find this story in Revelation, chapter 14.

These three angels fly through heaven with an important message for the whole world. In fact, no matter where you live, or what country you're from, or what language you speak, their message is just for you! What do these three angels say?

The **first angel** tells us to worship God because He is our Creator. Today many people have forgotten God.

They think humans came from monkeys or something else. But this angel reminds us to worship the Creator who made us, and soon He'll come take us back to heaven.

The **second angel** tells us to follow what the Bible teaches. The world teaches lies that pull us away from Jesus. Many people are confused and don't know what to believe. If we study the Bible, we'll know what's right—and we'll know Jesus as a Friend when He returns!

The **third angel** tells us that we need to make a choice. Will I worship God or Satan? If we love God we'll follow all of His laws, and that includes honoring His seventh-day Sabbath.

Right now, in many places around the world, it's easy for people to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. But someday people will mock God's followers, just like they made fun of Leonard when he didn't harvest his potatoes. You can ask God to help you stay close to Him and honor His Sabbath no matter what other people do.

So what did we learn about the three angels?

ANGEL 1 says: Worship God. He is your Creator and He's coming soon.

ANGEL 2 says: Follow the Bible. God's truth will lead you out of confusion.

ANGEL 3 says: You have a choice: follow God or Satan. Choose God by honoring all of His laws.

Next time you eat a potato, take a moment to think about the silent sermon your life is preaching to the people around you. It's true that Jesus didn't come in 1844, but He has promised to come when the time is right. More than anything, He wants to take you to heaven. He wants to take your friends to heaven. That's why He sent the three angels—to wake everyone up and tell us that the time is almost here!

[The story of Leonard Hastings was adapted by Chantal Klingbeil from the book *Ellen White: The Early Years: 1827-1862*, p. 118.]

Sermon Suggestions for Day of Prayer and Fasting, October 2, 2021

# Sermon Suggestions

[We encourage you as pastor/speaker to develop your own sermon for this special Sabbath. These Bible verses, questions, quotes, and thoughts may help as you prepare.]

**Sermon Theme:** Sharing Three Final Messages of Love as We Pray for Righteousness by Faith

**Questions to consider as you prepare your sermon:**

- **What is the mission of God's last-day church and people?**  
To share the three angels' messages (which includes giving the everlasting gospel to the world), calling people back to the pure, undiluted truth of the Scriptures and teaching them the importance of showing loyalty to God by honoring all of His laws.
- **Where is that mission found in the Bible?** (Matt. 24:14; Rev. 14:6-12)
- **How do we typically summarize this mission?**
  - First angel: Shares the everlasting gospel of Jesus and His love, life, death, resurrection, and intercession. Fear (love and respect) God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is here. Worship Him as the Creator—including Sabbath worship.
  - Second angel: Babylon is fallen. False religion is corrupt. Get out! Be separate from false religions and return to following the pure Word of God.
  - Third angel: Choose loyalty to God and honor His laws. Don't worship the beast or receive the mark of the beast.
- **Are we willing to die for the truths the three angels teach us?** (Rev. 12:11)
- **What is the mark of the beast?**  
A symbol of one's loyalty to Satan rather than to God (by complying with Sunday worship enforced by law).
- **Why is the day on which we worship so significant?** (Gen. 2:2, 3; Ex. 20:11)
- **How do we explain the mark of the beast from Scripture?**
  - a. The mark of the beast shows someone's opposition to God's law.  
Those who receive the mark of the beast are contrasted with true commandment keepers. (Rev. 14:9-12)  
God wants to write His law in our minds and actions. (Ex. 13:9)
  - b. The mark of the beast is a counterfeit of God's seal, the Sabbath. (Rev. 7:2, 3 refers to the seal of the "living God")  
"Living" = Creator. (Acts 14:15)  
God's seal/sign is the Sabbath. (Ezek. 20:12, 20; Ex. 31:13, 17)
  - c. Worship/Loyalty is the issue: Who has your heart? (Rev. 13:15, 16; 14:9; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4; here we associate the mark of the beast with worship)
  - d. Sunday worship becomes an issue when it is enforced by government law. (Rev. 13:15-17)
- **How can you share your sermon on the three angels' messages in a way that goes beyond the typical Adventist clichés?** (Pray about this as you look up the references in this section.)
- **Why are these messages actually messages of love for our world?** (John 3:17; 1 John 4:17; 1 Tim. 2:14; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Cor. 8:3; 1 John 5:3; Mark 12:30, 31; 1 Cor. 2:9)
- **What actions do these messages call for in our lives?** (John 14:15; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 3:18)
- **How are the three angels' messages relevant to our lives? Why should the old, young, and even children care?** (1 John 2:6; Rev. 22:11)
- **Why is the heavenly judgment good news for true believers?** (John 8:36; Isa. 33:22; Heb. 4:14-16)
- **What does praying for the latter rain have to do with sharing the three angels' messages?** (Joel 2, 3; Zech. 10:1)
- **How do we tie the story of the wedding garment to these messages?** (Matt. 22:12; Titus 3:5)

- **How do we share the precious message of righteousness through these three angels' messages?** (See excerpt from Ellen White below.)

**The Heart of God's Last Message (excerpt from Ellen White, *Last Day Events*, pp. 199-202)**

Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, "It is the third angel's message in verity."

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders [E.J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.

The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel.

The last message of mercy to be given to the world is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.

As the third message swells to a loud cry and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble.

As the end approaches, the testimonies of God's servants will become more decided and more powerful.

This message [Rev. 14:9-12] embraces the two preceding messages. It is represented as being given with a loud voice; that is, with the power of the Holy Spirit.

As the third angel's message swells into a loud cry, great power and glory will attend its proclamation. The faces of God's people will shine with the light of heaven.

Amidst the deepening shadows of earth's last great crisis, God's light will shine brightest, and the song of hope and trust will be heard in clearest and loftiest strains.

As foretold in the eighteenth of Revelation, the third angel's message is to be proclaimed with great power by those who give the final warning against the beast and his image.

**Additional Quotes from Inspiration**

"In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. *There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention*" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19, emphasis supplied).

“Christ as the precious pearl, and our privilege of possessing this heavenly treasure, is the theme on which we most need to dwell. It is the Holy Spirit that reveals to men the preciousness of the goodly pearl. The time of the Holy Spirit’s power is the time when in a special sense the heavenly gift is sought and found. In Christ’s day many heard the gospel, but their minds were darkened by false teaching, and they did not recognize in the humble Teacher of Galilee the Sent of God. But after Christ’s ascension His enthronement in His mediatorial kingdom was signalized by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit was given. Christ’s witnesses proclaimed the power of the risen Saviour. The light of heaven penetrated the darkened minds of those who had been deceived by the enemies of Christ. They now saw Him exalted to be ‘a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.’ Acts 5:31. They saw Him encircled with the glory of heaven, with infinite treasures in His hands to bestow upon all who would turn from their rebellion. As the apostles set forth the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, three thousand souls were convicted. They were made to see themselves as they were, sinful and polluted, and Christ as their friend and Redeemer. Christ was lifted up, Christ was glorified, through the power of the Holy Spirit resting upon men. By faith these believers saw Him as the One who had borne humiliation, suffering, and death that they might not perish but have everlasting life. The revelation of Christ by the Spirit brought to them a realizing sense of His power and majesty, and they stretched forth their hands to Him by faith, saying, ‘I believe’” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 118-120).

“Then the glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost bounds of the inhabited world. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Believers were reconverted. Sinners united with Christians in seeking the pearl of great price. The prophecy was fulfilled, The weak shall be ‘as David,’ and the house of David ‘as the angel of the Lord.’ Zechariah 12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of benevolence and love. One interest prevailed. One object swallowed up all others. All hearts beat in harmony. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s character, and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom. ‘The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. . . . With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all.’ Acts 4:32, 33. ‘And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.’ Acts 2:47. The Spirit of Christ animated the whole congregation; for they had found the pearl of great price” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 120, 121).

“These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is again to be revealed in His fulness by the Holy Spirit’s power. Men will discern the value of the precious pearl, and with the apostle Paul they will say, ‘What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.’ Philippians 3:7, 8” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 121).

### **A Fresh Look at the Judgment (excerpt from *Daring to Live by Every Word* by Melody Mason)**

Usually when you talk about a “coming judgment,” great fear and trepidation will come to hearts. This is natural, for if a judgment is taking place, it often means a law has been broken. In this case, it’s not just any man-made law. It is God’s law that has been broken, as summarized in the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20. The Bible tells us, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). That means we are guilty of breaking His law.

However, when we look closely at Revelation 14:7, the Bible tells us, “for the hour of His judgment has come.” This means that God is ultimately on trial here before the whole universe, and it is through His people that He is ultimately vindicated in this trial (Rom. 3:4). Now this would be death for us, if it were not for Jesus, because our righteous works (Isa. 64:6) cannot vindicate the character of God. The good news however, is that if we are in Jesus, only He is seen. Being in Jesus means we have the perfection of Jesus’ righteousness covering us, and there is no condemnation, but rather vindication for the character of God.

So in essence, the judgment is an urgent appeal to confess our sins and flee to the safety of Jesus. When we flee to the safety of Jesus, the judgment becomes good news, because the Judge is on our side. The Bible

tells us, “For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us” (Rev. 14:7; Isa. 33:22).

While the judgment is good news because we have an Advocate in heaven interceding on our behalf (Heb. 4:14-16), we still cannot be presumptuous and careless. As the Israelites earnestly searched their hearts during the Day of Atonement each year to make sure there was nothing between them and God, we must do today.

As we stand in the time of heavenly judgment, let us fully surrender our hearts to the spotlight of God’s Word. We are told, “That he might sanctify and cleanse [us—the Church] with the washing of water by the word, that he might present [it] to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that [it] should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:26, 27).

### **Sermon Illustration: Do You Know Your Bible?**

One day some Adventist Bible workers serving in a dangerous part of the world were seized and accused of being spies. “We are not spies!” they told their captors. “We are Adventist missionaries, simply here to share the love of Jesus.”

One of the captors, pointing a gun, looked at the missionaries with new interest. “You say you are Adventist missionaries! Then I have a question for you. Come with me.” He led them to a small building and made them sit down. “Do you have your Bibles?” They quickly pulled out their Bibles. “Show me with your Bibles what the three angels’ messages mean and why Adventists believe they are so significant!”

Immediately the missionaries opened the Word and began explaining Revelation 14 as their captor calmly listened. When they were finished, his face relaxed and he smiled. “I used to go to an Adventist school,” he told them. “I knew if you were really Adventist missionaries, you would be able to explain the three angels’ messages. If you couldn’t show me these things in the Bible, we probably would have held you hostage or worse, but now we will set you free because I am certain you are not spies.”

Talk about being put on the spot! Are we ready to share God’s Word? Are we ready to stand for truth, even at gunpoint? Are we ready to sing God’s praises, even if being hauled away to jail? “[Believers’] faith must be firmly founded upon the Word of God, so that when the testing time shall come . . . they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 299).

### **Personal Stories:**

- *Share a real-life story illustrating the life-changing power of the three angels’ messages in your (the pastor/speaker’s) own life.*
- *Share why you see these messages as “love” messages from God.*
- *Share stories of people standing strong for their faith.*
- *Share conversion stories of people who have left “Babylon” to discover Bible truth.*
- *People often forget sermon points, but they remember stories!*

**Make an Appeal:** Will you respond to God’s call in the three angels’ messages and share these messages of love with someone you know?

[Remember to invite people to attend the afternoon prayer time.]



## Three Messages of Love

and a Revival of Genuine Godliness

The three angels' messages are not typically what you think about when you plan a prayer retreat or a prayer meeting. However, as we enter the final scenes of earth's history, these messages of love are more relevant today than ever before. Not only is it time we learn what they mean, but it's time to ask God to write them on our hearts with such intensity that we will not be able to think of anything else. When these precious messages of love and righteousness by faith have pierced the deepest part of our heart and soul, our one burning passion will be to share these love letters with the world.

Have you ever received a genuine love letter? We aren't talking about those superficial "love notes" that came with kisses one day and turned icy cold the next. We are talking about the real deal—a love letter that came and you just knew that you had found your one true love. Think about how the person writing made you feel special, set-apart, unique. You realized you didn't have to work for their love. They were giving you a precious gift that money could never buy. They genuinely loved you for who you were, and they wanted to spend forever with you. As you reveled in the warmth and beauty of their love, you had only one desire—to love them back with all your heart, with the same intensity and passion. Maybe you longed to become a better person so that you could express your love more fully. Your utmost desire was to show them honor in every possible way. You delighted in the thought of becoming exclusively theirs for the rest of your life.

The book of Revelation is the ultimate love story. And Revelation 14 opens up the last three letters of love and mercy from the heavenly Bridegroom to a dying world. These letters identify Jesus' true bride, His church, and call her to prepare for His soon coming. These letters contain words of encouragement, promise, and warning. If we take these warnings to heart, we will be safe through the coming storms and will soon reunite with our heavenly Bridegroom.

As we open to Revelation 14, we see a picture of a Lamb (Jesus) standing on Mt. Zion along with the 144,000. The Bible tells us, "These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4).

This is a group of people who have a pure, undiluted faith. They haven't been influenced by the popular "What's most comfortable for me?" gospel. No! They are people of the Word, willing to do whatever the Bible says. Joyfully, they lay down all for the Lord. As a result, they get to follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

Referencing Revelation 14:4, Ellen White writes, "All who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 591).

Let's pause and review the three angels' messages briefly.

The first message begins in Revelation 14:6.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:6, 7, KJV).

As we look at this first message, we find three central themes: the everlasting gospel (which shows that we are saved by Jesus' work, not our own—see Rom. 1:16); the judgment (which is a call to flee to the safety of Christ); and worship of the Creator (which reminds us exactly where we came from, how we got here, and where we are going).

Isn't it interesting that this first message of love actually begins with the call to fear God?

In a day when "Men's hearts [are] failing them for fear" (Luke 21:26) as they look at things happening in the world, believers have been given a message that leads them to their only true safety. While the world is consumed with fear, God's people are learning to "fear God." He is their safe place. He is their Rock in the midst of the storms. He is their one true Love that will never leave them or forsake them.

Because they "fear God," they love Him passionately, and they have absolute loyalty to Him and full surrender to His will. This also means they take God and His Word seriously!

Unfortunately, most people live and act certain ways based on their *fear of society* and what others think of them or on their *fears of coming disaster*, not their *fear of God* or their respect of His Word. "The remarkable thing about fearing God," says writer Oswald Chambers, "is that, when you fear God, you fear nothing else; whereas, if you do not fear God, you fear everything else."<sup>1</sup>

While "fearing God" starts with an inner attitude and commitment of the heart to God, that attitude is to be carried out in everyday actions. And that's where "give glory to God" comes in. It has to do with living a lifestyle that brings God glory. The Bible tells us, "Do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). Giving glory to God is not natural. We naturally want to give glory to self! But we are called to die to self that Jesus may live in and through us.

The second and third angel's messages of love follow with a call to honor God's Word above the doctrines of men, and a call to worship God with all our heart, body, mind, and soul, so that we don't risk getting caught up in a deadly adulterous affair with the enemy of our souls. Remember, if God's seal is upon us, and our names are written in His book of life, the enemy can't put his deadly mark on us.

This afternoon we are going to spend some time praying for greater understanding and awareness of the relevancy of the three angels' messages in our daily lives. We are also going to pray that these messages, and the message of "righteousness by faith," would become the motivating force behind everything we do each day as Christians, for the central focus of the three angels' messages is all about Jesus—His great love and covering of righteousness. It's all about whom we will worship, how we worship, and where we are going to spend eternity. These messages couldn't be more relevant or more important. That's why Satan has clouded them over for so many decades with meaningless clichés and religious lingo. It's time to see them in a new light.

Ellen White writes:

"In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. *There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention*" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19, emphasis supplied).

We are living in serious times. The angels of Revelation 14 are crying out to God's people today, "Get

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.quotes.net/quote/11726>, accessed June 10, 2021.

ready, get ready, get ready. Ye will have to die a greater death to the world than ye have ever yet died” (*Early Writings*, p. 64). You will have to die to all other lovers except your One true Love, Christ Jesus!

Remember, Jesus never uses manipulation or force. He loves us so much that He has given us the gift of free choice. But time is running out. That’s why it’s so important for us to make our decision today.

The road ahead will be difficult, narrow, and steep. But Jesus holds out His nail-pierced hands and says, “See these scars? They are for you! Hold on to me. I am your only salvation. I am all you need. I love you more than life itself. Can’t you see what I did for you on the cross? I am faithful. I will never leave you. Don’t be afraid. Though a great battle lies ahead, I promise to carry you safely through to the other side. But you must trust Me implicitly and obey Me with all your heart. You can’t pretend to live for Me and live for the world, too.”

Jesus continues, as His eyes of tenderness search the deepest recesses of our hearts:

“I need to know, My bride, do you really love Me? If you love Me, confess your sins and keep my commandments. Don’t be mistaken! Doing these things doesn’t earn your salvation. It simply shows Me that you are already saved, because you honor the One who has saved you. Remember, if you try to get to heaven on your own merit, you won’t make it. Your good works are only filthy rags. Your only hope is in Me. Look to Me! Cling to Me! Depend on Me! Spend time with Me! Put away all distractions. Distractions are the enemy’s tactics to destroy you. Don’t follow the crowd any longer. They are headed to destruction. Don’t follow the wide path because it looks more comfortable. It will lead to death. I already died for you! I love you more than anyone—more than your mother, more than your best friend, more than your husband, more than any lover you’ve ever had. Please trust Me and follow Me. Put on your wedding garment—my righteousness. Drink in the written Word and keep looking to me. I will bring you safely home!”

Pray that God will help us take this appeal to heart. In fact, as we spend time in prayer this afternoon, let’s ask Jesus to speak to our hearts as never before. Let’s ask Him to bring these three love letters to life. As we’ve learned, these letters are calling us to a revival of genuine godliness that is all-encompassing. It’s about following the Lamb wherever He goes. It’s about coming out of spiritual Laodicea and learning to love God with all our body, heart, mind, and soul. These love letters not only affect every part of our life today, they affect our entire future! It’s time to get ready, for Jesus is coming soon to claim His bride.

## Prayer Focus

[The following prayer thoughts are just to get you started. We encourage you to look up the Bible passages as you pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you what to pray.]

### A Time of Praise – Corporate Prayer Time

- **Thank God** that He is a God who hears and answers prayer. (Matt. 7:7)
- **Thank God** that He cannot lie, and His Word does not return to Him void. (Isa. 55:11)
- **Thank God** that when we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. (1 John 5:14)
- **Thank God** for His exceedingly great and precious promises. (2 Pet. 1:4)
- **Thank God** that we don't have to be Bible scholars to understand truth. (2 Tim. 3:15)
- **Thank God** for the forgiveness of sin and victory in Jesus. (1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 15:57)
- **Thank God** for the beautiful message of righteousness by faith. (Rom. 3:26)
- **Thank God** for the gift of the Holy Spirit and the coming latter rain. (Joel 2:28)
- **Thank God** for the three angels' messages leading us to Jesus, the Lamb. (Rev. 14:4)

### Praying for God's Glory – Love Letter One

- **Thank God** for the beautiful first angel's message found in Revelation 14:6, 7.
- **Thank God** for the amazing gift of the everlasting gospel. (Rev. 14:6)
- **Thank God** that we are saved because of Jesus' righteousness, not our own. (Rom. 1:16)
- **Thank God** that the judgment is good news for the Christian. (Rev. 15:4)
- **Thank God** that our Creator is also our righteous redeemer. (Isa. 43:1)
- **Ask God** to take away our fear of the judgment and help us rest in Him. (Ps. 61:2)
- **Ask God** to give us ears and heart to grasp the significance of this first letter. (Rev. 14:6)
- **Ask God** to forgive us for selfishness and pride, even spiritual pride. (Prov. 16:18)
- **Ask God** to forgive us for fearing other things instead of fearing Him. (Rev. 14:7)
- **Ask God** to help us live for His glory in every area of our lives. (1 Cor. 10:31)
- **Ask God** to help us honor His Sabbath, the memorial of Creation. (Rev. 14:7)
- **Ask God** that we would truly see Jesus' love for His redeemed followers. (Rev. 14:1)

### Praying to Come Out of Babylon and Back to the Bible – Love Letter Two

- **Thank God** that He loves us so much He calls us out of spiritual confusion. (Rev. 14:8)
- **Thank God** for this second love letter that leads us to His Word of truth. (John 17:17)
- **Thank God** for giving us His Word so we can lead others to Him. (Eph. 5:26)

- **Ask God** to forgive us for ignoring the second angel's message. (Rev. 14:8)
- **Ask God** to forgive us for ignoring His many love letters in the Word. (Matt. 13:15)
- **Ask God** to forgive us for laziness and not seeking Him wholeheartedly. (Jer. 29:13)
- **Ask God** to forgive us for not spending time with Him each day. (Isa. 50:4)
- **Ask God** to help us find genuine daily delight in studying His Word. (Jer. 15:16)
- **Ask God** to help us make every decision based on His Word. (Isa. 8:20)
- **Ask God** to help us surrender self and follow the truths of the Bible fully. (James 1:22)
- **Ask God** to give us strength to walk away from all false teachings. (2 Tim. 4:3)

### **Praying for Loyalty and Obedience to God – Love Letter Three**

- **Thank God** for His appeal of love and mercy offered in the third message. (Rev. 14:9-12)
- **Thank God** that our Advocate and Judge is on our side and fighting for us. (Isa. 33:22)
- **Thank God** for the gift of the seventh-day Sabbath, His sacred day of worship (Ex. 31:16)
- **Ask God** to help us honor the seventh-day Sabbath, even to our death. (Matt. 5:10)
- **Ask God** for help to stand strong and worship only Him. (Rev. 14:9-12)
- **Ask God** to place His mark upon us instead of Satan's mark. (Rev. 7:2, 3)
- **Ask God** to lovingly shelter us from His coming wrath. (Rev. 14:10)
- **Ask God** to give us rest even while the wicked are in turmoil around us. (Rev. 14:11)
- **Ask God** that He will give us the faith and patience of the saints. (Rev. 14:12)
- **Ask God** to help us recognize truth so we are not spiritually deceived. (Mark 13:22)
- **Ask God** to prepare us for the latter rain and His soon coming. (Joel 2:28)
- **Ask God** to help us search Daniel and Revelation as we prepare for last days. (Rev. 1:1-3)
- **Ask God** to help us truly understand the significance of these three messages. (Rev. 14)
- **Ask God** to give us courage to boldly share these three messages of love. (1 Pet. 3:15)

## Powerful Prayer Promises

(A Collection of Bible Promises and Thoughts from Spirit of Prophecy)

“Grasp His promises as leaves from the tree of life: ‘Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.’ John 6:37. As you come to Him, believe that He accepts you, because He has promised. You can never perish while you do this—never” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 66).

“As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Pet. 1:3, 4).

“All who consecrate soul, body, and spirit to God will be constantly receiving a new endowment of physical and mental power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the breath of His own spirit, the life of His own life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in heart and mind. . . . Through co-operation with Christ they are complete in Him, and in their human weakness they are enabled to do the deeds of Omnipotence” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 827).

“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14).

“Just as long as the church is satisfied with small things, it is disqualified to receive the great things of God” (*Home Missionary*, Nov. 1, 1893).

“Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone” (Zech. 10:1).

“The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it” (*Review and Herald*, Mar. 19, 1895).

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13).

“Will we wrestle with God in prayer? Will we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? This is what we need and may have at this time. . . . If we will walk humbly with God, God will walk with us” (*Prayer*, p. 87).

“If two of you AGREE on earth concerning anything that they ask, IT WILL BE DONE for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:19, 20, emphasis supplied).

“The greatest blessing that God can give to man is the spirit of earnest prayer. All heaven is open before the man of prayer. . . . The ambassadors of Christ will have power with the people after they have, with earnest supplication, come before God” (*Prayer*, p. 83).

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask ANYTHING according to His WILL, He hears us” (1 John 5:14, emphasis supplied).

“All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised” (*Christ's*

*Object Lessons*, p. 149).

“And WHATEVER things you ask in prayer, BELIEVING, you will receive” (Matt. 21:22, emphasis supplied).

“Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 509).

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me . . . to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

“If you want power you may have it; it is waiting your draft upon it. Only believe in God, take Him at His Word, act by faith, and blessings will come” (*Prayer*, p. 84).

“In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22).

“There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God” (*Christian Service*, p. 254).

“For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones’” (Isa. 57:15).

“From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 300).

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise” (Ps. 51:17).

“The greatest victories to the church of Christ or to the individual Christian are not those that are gained by talent or education, by wealth or the favor of men. They are those victories that are gained in the audience chamber with God, when earnest, agonizing faith lays hold upon the mighty arm of power” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 203).

“You do not have because you do not ask” (James 4:2). “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you WILL receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:24, emphasis supplied).

“It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525).

“If you ABIDE in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it SHALL be done for you” (John 15:7, emphasis supplied).

“If we desire to know and to do God's will, His promises are ours” (*From Heaven With Love*, p. 166).

“With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God ALL THINGS are possible” (Mark 10:27, emphasis supplied).

“Natural impossibilities cannot prevent the work of the Omnipotent One” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 535).

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man AVAILS much” (James 5:16, emphasis supplied).

“An appeal to Heaven by the humblest saint is more to be dreaded by Satan than the decrees of cabinets or the mandates of kings” (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 82).

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have BELIEVED” (John 20:29, emphasis supplied).

“There is no danger that the Lord will neglect the prayers of His people. The danger is that in temptation and trial they will become discouraged, and fail to persevere in prayer” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 175).

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself STRONG on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (2 Chron. 16:9, emphasis supplied).

“The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 148).

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly ABOVE all that we ask or think, according to the POWER [*His power*] that works in us” (Eph. 3:20, emphasis supplied).

“The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him” (*My Life Today*, p. 55).

“Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is NOTHING too hard for You” (Jer. 32:17, emphasis supplied).

“It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 146).

“Ask, and it WILL be given to you; seek, and you WILL find; knock, and it WILL be opened to you” (Matt. 7:7, emphasis supplied).

“In sincerity, in soul hunger, cry after God. Wrestle with the heavenly agencies until you have the victory. Put your whole being into the Lord’s hands, soul, body, and spirit, and resolve to be His loving, consecrated agency, moved by His will, controlled by His mind, infused by His Spirit” (*Prayer*, p. 75).

“And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him” (Acts 5:32).

“Man can accomplish nothing without God, and God has arranged His plans so as to accomplish nothing in the restoration of the human race without the cooperation of the human with the divine. The part man is required to sustain is immeasurably small, yet in the plan of God it is just that part that is needed to make the work a success” (*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 319).

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

“We must look to Christ; we must resist as He resisted; we must pray as He prayed; we must agonize as He agonized, if we would conquer as He conquered” (*That I May Know Him*, p. 34).

“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” (Num. 23:19).

“Just believe and praise God and go forward. We are almost home. . . . Bear your whole weight on the promises of God. Believe it is your privilege to believe” (Letter 31, Jan. 1, 1887).

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:57).