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But, Lord, I don't see how!

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Righteousness by Faith and the Third Angel's Message — 5

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who hangs on a tree” (Gal. 3:13 NIV).



▲ George R. Knight

Uplifting faith in Christ as the heart of the Third Angel's message became central to Ellen White's message at the 1888 General Conference session and beyond.

Soon after the Minneapolis meeting, she made one of her most powerful statements on Revelation 14:12 and the core meaning of the 1888 message. “The third angel's message,” she penned, “is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. *The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand.* I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness.

“*The Faith of Jesus.*’ It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus that belongs to the third angel's message? *Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that He might become our sin-pardoning Saviour.* He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might

take His righteousness. And *faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus . . .*

“There is salvation for the sinner in the blood of Jesus Christ alone, which cleans us from all sin. The man with a cultivated intellect may have vast stores of knowledge, he may engage in theological speculations, he may be great and honored of men and be considered the repository of knowledge, but unless he has a saving knowledge of Christ crucified for him, and by faith lays hold on the righteousness of Christ crucified for him, and by faith lays hold on the righteousness of Christ, he is lost. *Christ was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5 KJV).* ‘Saved by the blood of Jesus Christ’ will be our only hope for time and our song throughout eternity” (MS 24, 1888; *italics supplied*).

Are you getting the message? We need to. It is the most crucial thing that we can ever hear — that Christ died for us, and that we can be saved only through having a vital faith in His sacrifice. That is at the core of the faith of Jesus and Revelation 14:12. It is the core of what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist. And it is the core of what it means to be Christian. With only the commandments of God, we might be “Adventists” [i.e. church members], but not Christians. ■

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But, Lord, I don't see how!

Some call it a whisper. Some call it a nudge. You may have sensed it as a prompt. Whatever the definition, I'm sure you have felt it, too. It's not an audible sound, but it's as real as though it were. A familiar Scripture term is *a still, small voice*.

There's no predictable pattern; it may go like this: You're rushing around the house getting ready for the day, when a name comes to mind. It's a friend you haven't talked to for a while. Nothing to suggest there is any trouble, it's just the name — or the face — you can't shake. Is that God's whisper, saying, “Why don't you give Sally a call?” Why not assume it is, and call her? Something simple . . . “I was combing my hair this morning and your name came to mind so I thought I'd just call and tell you I prayed for you today.”

Three minutes.

But what if Sally didn't need a call? Okay, but what if she did? You may never know the answer to that question. Or Sally may tell you. Either way, you've been faithful to respond to the whisper you sensed from the heart of God. He loves that.

You're sitting in a worship service as the saints are assembling. A couple comes in and sits across the aisle from you. You don't recognize them but they kind of look like they could use a friend. You think to yourself, “*I probably should speak to them after service.*” Then the nudge seems to suggest, “*Maybe they need it now.*” Have you just created a minor disruption during the prelude, or have you just responded to a nudge from the throne room of the universe? Have you embarrassed the guests? or have you honored them by showing love that was spontaneous and genuine? I believe God smiles when we err on the side of showing we care.

“But, brother Don, I'm too shy to do that.” This isn't about you. This is about people God loves and how He searches for those who will deliver that message for Him. So you and I seek to live in a way that is sensitive to His nudge, to His whisper. It can happen often, and our goal is to walk with Him so that we sense the prompt and have the grace to respond to it. He loves that. ■

Don Jacobsen is a retired pastor, seminary professor, conference president and former president of Adventist World Radio who writes for HOPE: Houses of Prayer Everywhere, a Prayer Ministry service of the North American Division.



▲ Don Jacobsen

