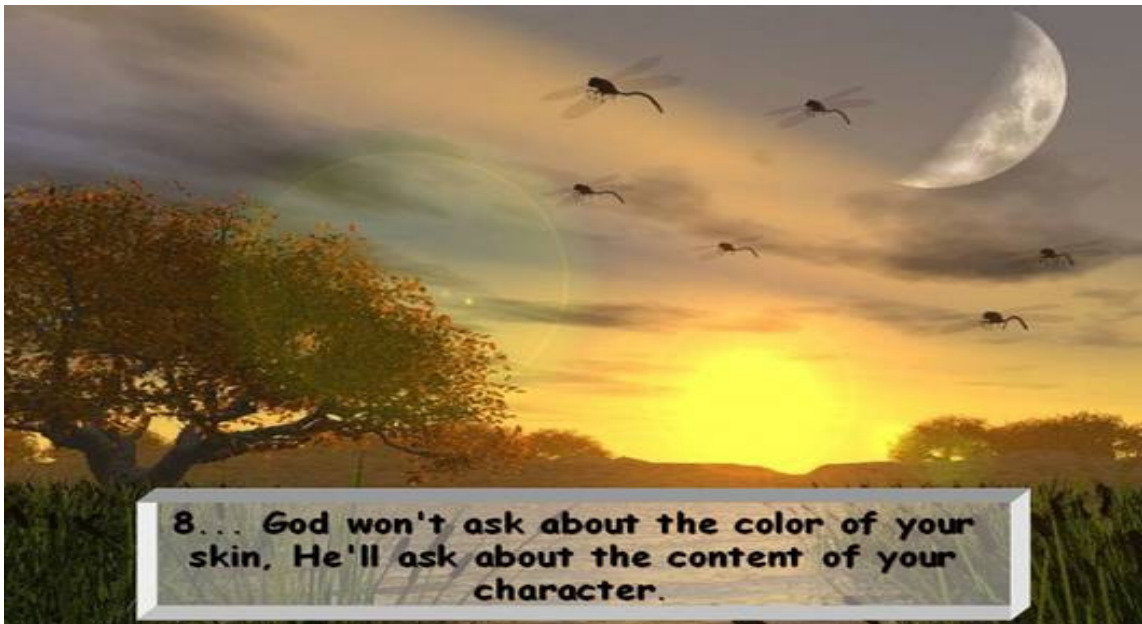


1

Reception of the Latter Rain



2
3

4 **Graham F. Watts, Sr.**

5

6 **VISION:** To hear the midnight cry, “The bridegroom comes, go out to meet
7 Him” (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1
8 John 3:2).

9

10 **MISSION:** Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad,
11 to rejoice, give honor to Christ and be ready for the marriage of the
12 Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

13

14 **VALUES:** Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without
15 fault before God (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in
16 heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb’s fine, clean and
17 white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk
18 humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

19

20 **OVERALL AIM:** Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to
21 inquiring minds to prompt the following inquiries: “Are our feet on
22 the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the
23 Father” (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with
24 Christ (Galatians 2:20)?

25 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

26
27 To help believers prepare for reception of the Holy Spirit.
28
29

30 **OBJECTIVE/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH**

31
32 Enable believers to comply with the steps that satisfy conditions for
33 outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
34
35

36 **SIGNIFICANCE: SO WHAT**

37
38 “Not everyone that [says]..., ‘Lord, Lord,’ ...enters... the kingdom
39 of heaven; but [they] that do the will of... [God]” (Matthew 7:21).
40 The Revelator emphasized this same theme in, “Blessed are they that
41 do His commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life
42 and may enter in through the gates, into the city” (Revelation
43 22:14). However, therein lays the challenge! It is easier to preach
44 about God’s requirements than to obey them (read Romans 7:15, 19 &
45 21). And knowing that “...To obey is better than sacrifice...” (1
46 Samuel 15:22) does not make obedience automatic. Lord, help us!

47
48
49 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

50
51 “...In my flesh dwells no good thing! ...To will is present with me
52 but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18). So
53 religious people unclothed in the full armor of God can cuddle sin
54 despite familiarity with religious information. “The Spirit gives
55 life; the flesh counts for nothing...” (John 6:63, NIV). **“...Through**
56 **the... Holy Spirit God communicates with man...**” (Patriarchs and
57 Prophets, {PP} 404.4). Righteousness of the law flourishes in us who
58 walk after the Spirit (Romans 8:4). For fulfillment of the Holy
59 Spirit’s outpouring (read Acts 2:17) in the last days [read 2 Timothy
60 3:1-7) and preparation for its reception the study question follows.

61 **STUDY QUESTION**

62 What should I do to prepare for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?
63

64 **ANSWER SOURCE: HOLY BIBLE**

65
66 1. To prepare for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we must turn
67 away from broken cisterns (Jeremiah 2:13)--wells without water (2
68 Peter 2:17) and return to our first love for God (Revelation 2:4).
69 We must not continue to go astray by forsaking the right way as did
70 Balaam, "...who loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15)
71 and despite being "...Rebuked for his iniquity [by] the dumb ass
72 [that he rode], ... the madness of the prophet" (2 Peter 2:16) was
73 unconquerable. If in this age we desire the outpouring of the Holy
74 Spirit, we must "...Turn from [our] evil ways..." (2 Kings 17:13;
75 Ezekiel 33:11 & Zechariah 1:4).

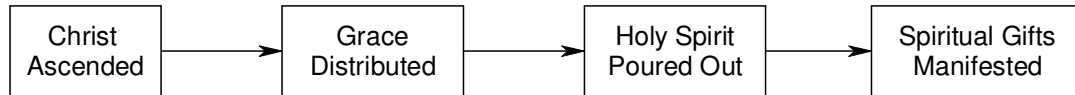
76
77 2. "...If any man **THIRST** let him **COME** to me **AND DRINK**" (John 7:37).
78 Thirst for what? **THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, FORGIVENESS OF**
79 **INIQUITIES** (read Jeremiah 31:34) and **RIGHTEOUSNESS** [KFR] (read
80 Matthew 5:6 & Isaiah 54:17). God knows everything that comes into
81 our mind (Ezekiel 11:5, Psalms 95:10) and when we thirst, "...
82 **DILIGENTLY SEEK** Him" (Jeremiah 29:13 & Hebrews 11:6) we will
83 **"...TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY"** (Revelation 22:17) and all
84 **"...That BELIEVE ON [JESUS]; ...out of [their] belly shall flow**
85 **rivers of living water"** (John 7:38), [which is]: **"...The Spirit..."**
86 (John 7:39, NIV). Because of our initial thirst, "We were all
87 baptized by one Spirit into one body... and we were all given the
88 one Spirit to drink" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Some received the
89 Spirit at repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38) and others by laying-
90 on-of-hands (Acts 8:14-17). "We know that we live in Him and He in
91 us because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:13, NIV).
92 **"...And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, [s/he] does**

93 not belong to Christ" (Romans 8:9, NIV), but if we have the Spirit
 94 and "...Are led by the Spirit of God, [we] are the sons [and
 95 daughters] of God" (Romans 8:14, NIV).

96
 97 3. The promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain measure
 98 is a conditional gift. Reception of the Holy Spirit requires us to
 99 **"...TURN TO [GOD] WITH [THE WHOLE] HEART AND WITH FASTING, WEeping**
 100 **AND MOURNING** (Joel 2:12). It is a lifestyle of repentance and
 101 conversion, turning from iniquities for blotting out of sins and
 102 reception of refreshing from the Lord (Acts 3:19 & 26). We must
 103 cleanse ourselves from ALL filthiness of the flesh and spirit... (2
 104 Corinthians 7:1). **THEN**, "The Lord [will]... pity his people" (Joel
 105 2:18) and "...do great things (Joel 2:21). As it was in the past,
 106 when this level of **ACCORD** comes (Acts 2:1) we can expect to be
 107 "...Filled with the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 2:4), which Peter
 108 testified fulfilled Joel 2:28-29 (Acts 2:14 & 17-18). "[Pentecost
 109 was **NO**] fluctuating revival enthusiasm that... [ebbed and flowed]
 110 like the tide... [bearing] a delusive exterior...." (Testimonies
 111 for the Church, Volume 4, {4T} 73.4). It was the real McCoy!

112
 113 4. The account of every believer receives grace "...according to the
 114 measure of the gift of Christ" (Ephesians 4:7) when Christ ascended
 115 on high... and gave gifts unto men (read Ephesians 4:8 & John
 116 14:16, 18 & 26, John 16:7, NIV). **"THE HOLY SPIRIT, FULL OF GRACE**
 117 **AND POWER, WORKS UPON MIND AND HEART"** (God's Amazing Grace, {AG}
 118 206.4). **"THE GIFTS ARE ALREADY OURS IN CHRIST, BUT THEIR ACTUAL**
 119 **POSSESSION DEPENDS UPON OUR RECEPTION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD** (COL
 120 327.2). Christ gave the manifestation of the Spirit that every
 121 person might profit (1 Corinthians 12:7). The profit or benefit of
 122 receiving the Holy Spirit include "...wisdom, ...knowledge...,
 123 faith..., healing..., working miracles, prophecy, ...discerning of
 124 spirits, ...[speaking] tongues [languages] AND ...[interpreting]
 125 tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:8-11), which enhances "...Apostles,

126 prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers" (Ephesians 4:11).
 127 "[By] the Holy Spirit... God... works in [ALL] both to will and to
 128 do of His good pleasure" (Messages to Young People, {MYP} 147.2).
 129 The fulfilled divine contract: "Behold, I send the promise of My
 130 Father upon you..." (Luke 24:49) empowered first century disciples
 131 to "...Received not the grace of God in vain" (2 Corinthians 6:1).
 132 A visual of this paragraph appears below.



"Grace is an attribute of God shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it, ...it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow this grace upon every one who hungers for it" (AG 10.2; HP 34.3; ML 100.2; TM 519.2). "The power of God awaits [our] demand and reception" (TM 174.2). "Christ desires all to enjoy the wealth of His grace" (CM 108.2).

133
 134

ANSWER SOURCE: SACRED WRITINGS

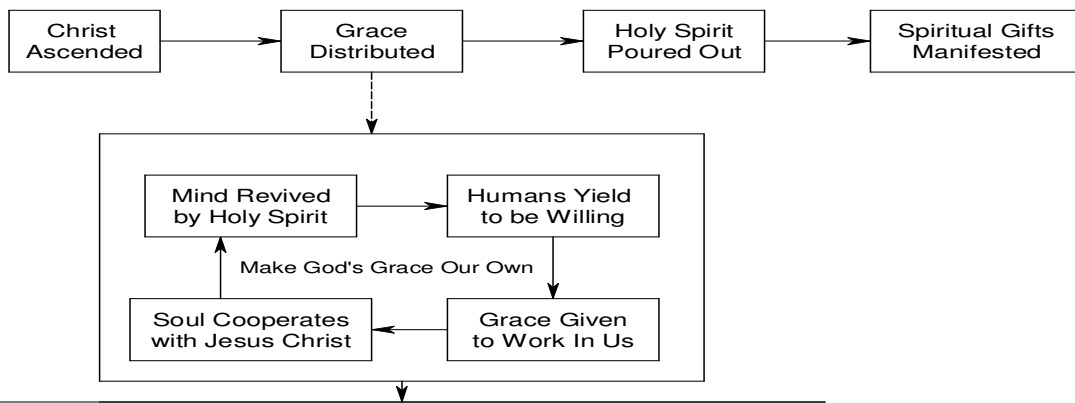
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We are pursuing answers to the question: What should I do to prepare for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? More answers follow!

1. A television commercial once popularized the statement: "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." **"WITH THE MIND WE SERVE THE LORD [Rom 7:25]**. The head is the capitol of the body" (Spiritual Gifts, Volume 4A, {4aSG} 146.1). **"THE MIND CONTROLS THE WHOLE MAN. ALL OUR ACTIONS... HAVE THEIR SOURCE IN THE MIND; IT IS THE MIND THAT WORSHIPS GOD AND ALLIES US TO HEAVENLY BEINGS"** (Child Guidance, {CG} 360.1). **"THE MIND** is to be **DISCIPLINED, EDUCATED, TRAINED** ...to do **SERVICE FOR GOD** in ways that are not in harmony with inborn inclination. ...**THE HEART** must be **EDUCATED TO BECOME STEADFAST IN GOD,** ...to **FORM HABITS OF THOUGHT THAT WILL ENABLE [US] TO RESIST TEMPTATION.** [Hence, divine counsels says to meditate on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely and of good report (TNJPLG) (Philippians 4:8, Modern KJV)]. ...The **PRINCIPLES OF THE WORD** of God... [must **INFLUENCE] EVERY ACT, WORD [AND] THOUGHT** (Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, {CT})

155 20.1). Thus, "While we YIELD OURSELVES AS INSTRUMENTS FOR THE HOLY
156 SPIRIT'S WORKING, the grace of God works in us to deny old
157 inclinations, to overcome powerful propensities and to form new
158 habits. As we CHERISH AND OBEY THE PROMPTINGS OF THE SPIRIT our
159 hearts are enlarged to receive more and more of His power and to do
160 more and better work" (COL 353.1). "Those who WALK AND TALK WITH
161 GOD practice the GENTLENESS OF CHRIST. In their lives: FORBEARANCE,
162 MEEKNESS AND SELF-RESTRAINT UNITE WITH HOLY EARNESTNESS AND
163 DILIGENCE. As they advance heavenward, the sharp, rough edges of
164 character [wear] off and godliness [appears]. [Either] **The Holy**
165 **Spirit, full of grace and power, works upon mind and heart"** (AG
166 206.4) or "Satan works on human minds, leading them to think that
167 there is wonderful knowledge to be gained apart from God" (COL
168 108.1).

169
170 2. "To make God's grace our own, we must act our part" (MYP 147.2).
171 "The Lord does not... perform for us either the willing or the
172 doing. This is our proper work. As soon as we earnestly enter
173 upon the work, God's grace is given to work in us to will and to
174 do, but never as a substitute for our effort. Our souls are to be
175 aroused to cooperate. The Holy Spirit works the human agent to work
176 out our own salvation. This is the practical lesson the Holy Spirit
177 is striving to teach us--"...God... works in you both to will and
178 to do of His good pleasure" (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel
179 Workers, {TM} 240.2). "Man needs a power out of and above himself
180 to restore him to the likeness of God; but because he needs divine
181 aid, it does not make human activity unessential" (Selected
182 Messages Book 1, {1 SM 375.2). A visual of this paragraph follows.
183



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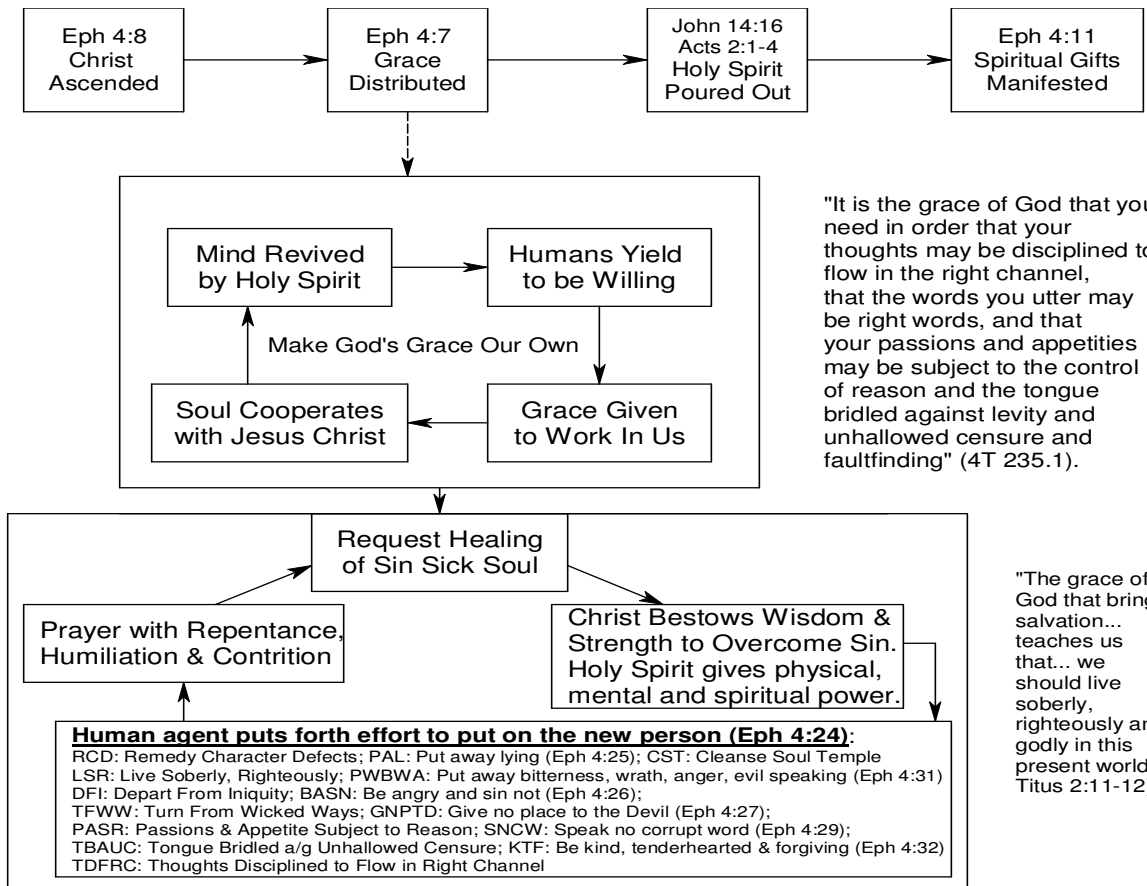
186 3. We have a prototype of transformative first century A.D.
187 Christianity. "The disciples prepared... for their work [and so
188 should we]. Before the day of Pentecost, they met together and **PUT**
189 **AWAY ALL DIFFERENCES**. They were of one accord--['...likeminded,
190 having the same love, of one mind' (Philippians 2:2 & 4:2) AND ...'
191 the same judgment' (1 Corinthians 1:10)]. They **BELIEVED CHRIST'S**
192 **PROMISE** that [He would give] the blessing ...and they **PRAYED IN**
193 **FAITH**. ...**THEY CLAIMED THE ENDOWMENT OF POWER THAT CHRIST HAD**
194 **PROMISED**. **THEN** ...the Holy Spirit was poured out AND thousands
195 were converted in a day" (The Desire of Ages, {DA} 827.1).

196

197 4. Obedience to God was pivotal to outpouring of the Holy Spirit—the
198 former rain. "In obedience to the word of their master the
199 disciples assembled in Jerusalem to wait for fulfillment of the
200 promise. They spent 10 days [in] ...**DEEP HEART SEARCHING**. They
201 **PUT AWAY ALL DIFFERENCES** and drew close together in Christian
202 fellowship" (Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8, {8T} 15.2). "No
203 longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. ...**Christ filled**
204 **their thoughts; advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind**
205 **and character they [became] like their Master...**" (Acts 4:13 in The
206 Acts of the Apostles, {AA} 45.2). At the end of ten days, the Lord
207 fulfilled His promise by a wonderful outpouring of His Spirit" (8T
208 15.2), "...After the disciples had **COME INTO PERFECT UNITY**, when
209 they were **NO LONGER STRIVING FOR THE HIGHEST PLACE**.... They were **OF**

210 ONE ACCORD ...of ONE HEART AND OF ONE SOUL [because] the Spirit of
 211 Him who died that sinners might live, animated the entire
 212 congregation of believers" (Evangelism, {Ev} 698.3 & 8T 20.4).

213
 214 5. Obedience to God will be central to outpouring of the Holy Spirit—
 215 the latter rain. "There must be earnest effort to obtain the
 216 blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His
 217 blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it"
 218 (Selected Messages Book 1, {1SM} 121.1). "There is no limit to the
 219 usefulness of one who [PUTS] SELF ASIDE [AND] MAKES ROOM FOR THE
 220 WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT upon [the] heart and lives a life wholly
 221 consecrated to God. ALL WHO CONSECRATE BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT TO
 222 HIS SERVICE WILL BE CONSTANTLY RECEIVING A NEW ENDOWMENT OF
 223 PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL POWER. ...Christ gives them the
 224 breath of His own Spirit, the life of His own life. THE HOLY SPIRIT
 225 PUTS FORTH ITS HIGHEST ENERGIES TO WORK IN MIND AND HEART. Through
 226 the grace given us we may achieve victories that because of our own
 227 erroneous and preconceived opinions, our defects of character, our
 228 smallness of faith, have seemed impossible" (AG 208.5). "It is
 229 left with us to REMEDY THE DEFECTS IN OUR CHARACTER, to CLEANSE THE
 230 SOUL TEMPLE OF EVERY DEFILEMENT, ["...DEPART FROM INIQUITY" (2 Tim
 231 2:19) and "...TURN FROM... WICKED WAYS..." (2 Chronicles 7:14). *How*
 232 *do we do that?* IF WE PRAY TO THE SAVIOR IN HUMILIATION AND CONTRITION
 233 SEEKING HELP TO HEAL THE DISORDERS OF OUR SIN-SICK SOUL, HE BESTOWS
 234 WISDOM AND STRENGTH TO OVERCOME (AA 532.1). It is our work by:
 235 CONFESSION, HUMILIATION, REPENTANCE AND EARNEST PRAYER to fulfill
 236 the conditions upon which God [promises] to grant us His blessing"
 237 (Last Day Events, {LDE} 189.1)]. THEN the latter rain will fall
 238 upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of
 239 Pentecost" (Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, {5T} 214.2).



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6. "...The establishment of the Christian church is given us not only as an important portion of sacred history but also as a lesson. All who profess the name of Christ should be **WAITING, WATCHING AND PRAYING WITH ONE HEART**¹. **ALL DIFFERENCES SHOULD BE PUT AWAY**² and **UNITY AND TENDER LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER PERVADE THE WHOLE**³; [as exemplified in being "...warmhearted, self-denying and self-sacrificing" (6T 85.1)], then our prayers may go up together to our heavenly Father with strong, earnest faith [AND] we may wait with patience and hope for fulfillment of the promise" (Story of Redemption {SR} 246.3). Pause and reflect on the three conditions that are to precede communal prayer and waiting expectantly for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Are we doing these things?

254
 255 7. The Laodicean church must "...Arise [and] shine for... light [has]
 256 come..." (Isaiah 60:1). "We are too easily satisfied with our
 257 attainments. We feel rich and increased with goods..., [unaware]
 258 that we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked (Revelation
 259 3:17). [That diagnosis might be difficult to swallow in a church
 260 populated with intellectuals. However, the true witness, who knows
 261 that "...The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God..." (1
 262 Corinthians 3:19) says:] '...BUY OF ME GOLD TRIED IN THE FIRE,
 263 ...WHITE RAIMENT [and] ...EYE SALVE' (Revelation 3:18 in 5T 214.3 &
 264 Mind, Character and Personality, Volume 2, {2MCP} 725.3).

265
 266 a. "The **gold tried in the fire** represents LOVE AND FAITH—the love
 267 of God with living, abiding faith" (Testimonies for the
 268 Church, Volume 4, {4T} 558.4, 5T 105.2; COL 158.2; 2MCP 725.3;
 269 S.D.A. Bible Commentary, Vol. 7, {7BC} 965.1). **"Many are**
 270 **nearly destitute of love"** (Counsels on Health, {CH} 402.3).
 271 **"The Holy Spirit is waiting to kindle in the heart the love of**
 272 **God THAT His praise may be spoken from lips that are true,**
 273 **unselfish, clean and honest"** (Reflecting Christ, {RC} 102.2).

274
 275 b. "...The **white raiment...** is [CHRIST'S... RIGHTEOUSNESS...]"
 276 (Our High Calling, {OHC} 350.3; 7BC 964.7, 7BC 965.9 & Isaiah
 277 54:17) [and] "...PURITY OF CHARACTER, ...[which] Christ
 278 [embodies (read 1 Corinthians 1:30) AND] imparts to the
 279 [repentant] sinner" (4T 88.2). "In the ritual service, salt
 280 was added to every sacrifice [to] ...signify that only the
 281 righteousness of Christ could make the service acceptable to
 282 God. Referring to this practice, Jesus said, 'Every sacrifice
 283 shall be salted with salt' [(Mark 9:49), including ourselves,
 284 which we are to present to God as a living sacrifice (read
 285 Romans 12:1). Hence, Jesus says, 'You are the salt of the

286 earth... (Matthew 5:13], ‘...Have salt in yourselves...’”
 287 (Mark 9:50 in DA 439.2). Shall we not heed Christ’s appeal?

288
 289 c. “The **eye salve** is WISDOM AND GRACE which enables us to discern
 290 between evil and good, and to detect sin under any guise” (Rom
 291 6:1-2 in 4T 88.2). “...The oil for anointing is the oil of
 292 HIS GRACE, which gives spiritual eyesight to the soul in
 293 blindness and darkness, that [s/he] may distinguish between
 294 the workings of the Spirit of God and the spirit of the enemy”
 295 (7BC 965.9). Without eye salve, we are not only blind (read
 296 Rev 3:17 & 2 Peter 1:5-9) but also vain in our worship (read
 297 John 4:23 & 16:13; Matthew 15:9).

298
 299 8. **“Heavenly intelligences are waiting to co-operate with humans...**
 300 that they may reveal... what... through union with the Divine may
 301 be accomplished for the saving of souls...” (The Ministry of
 302 Healing, {MH} 159.4). [But] **“The sacred temple of the body must be**
 303 **kept pure and uncontaminated that God's Holy Spirit may dwell**
 304 **therein.** We [must] guard faithfully the Lord's property for any
 305 abuse of our powers shortens the time that our lives could be used
 306 for the glory of God. ...We must consecrate... soul, body and
 307 spirit to God. All is His... and must be used intelligently to the
 308 end that we may preserve the talent of life. **By properly using our**
 309 **powers to their fullest extent in the most useful employment, by**
 310 **keeping every organ in health, by so preserving every organ that**
 311 **mind, sinew and muscle shall work harmoniously, we may do the most**
 312 **precious service for God”** (My Life Today, {ML} 134.5). “Are we
 313 striving... to ATTAIN TO THE STATURE OF MEN AND WOMEN IN CHRIST?
 314 Are we SEEKING FOR HIS FULLNESS, **EVER** PRESSING TOWARD the mark set
 315 before us--the PERFECTION OF HIS CHARACTER (read Philippians 3:14)?
 316 *When the lord's people reach this mark, they will [receive the] seal in their foreheads.*
 317 *Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ* and the **recording angel will**

318 **declare, It is finished'**" (Our High Calling, {OHC} 150.6, S.D.A. Bible
319 Commentary, Vol. 6, {6BC} 1118.1; Last Day Events, {LDE} 222.1).
320 We have covered a lot of material. A review of key points follows.

321

322 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: Let us review the action steps for
323 reception of the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

- 324 a. Thirst as in diligently seek God with the WHOLE heart,
- 325 b. Get faith, love, perfection of character, wisdom and grace,
- 326 c. Receive not the grace of God in vain,
- 327 d. Cleanse the soul temple of every defilement,
- 328 e. Depart from iniquity and wicked ways,
- 329 f. Drink as in earnestly seek and claim the Holy Spirit,
- 330 g. Believe Jesus' promises that He will give the Holy Spirit,
- 331 h. Resolve as in put away all difference between brethren,
- 332 i. Cease all striving for the highest place,
- 333 j. Cease to focus our hopes on attainment of worldly greatness,
- 334 k. Come into perfect unity as in be of one heart, of one soul and
335 one judgment regarding advancement of Christ's kingdom,
- 336 l. Have unity and tender love for one another as in being
337 warmhearted, self-denying and self-sacrificing,
- 338 m. Confess your faults one to another, repent of sin and pray,
- 339 n. Wait, watch and pray with one heart,
- 340 o. Pray in faith without doubting,
- 341 p. Claim and lay hold on divine power (Acts 1:8, 4:33; John 1:12; 2
342 Peter 1:3) that Christ has promised (RC, 311.7) for making room
343 for the working of the Holy Spirit,
- 344 q. Yield self to the Holy Spirit's working,
- 345 r. Cherish and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit,
- 346 s. Become like Christ in mind (Philippians 2:7) and character and
347 t. Ever press toward the mark of perfection of character in Christ.

348 "...Satan fears... that the people of God shall clear the way by
349 removing every hindrance so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit
350 upon a languishing church and impenitent congregation" (MYP, 133.1).
351 God is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to His children than are
352 earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. Whosoever
353 honors God, He will honor (1 Samuel 2:30).

354

355 **DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?**

356

357 "Well, 2009 has been designated by the North American Division of the
358 Seventh-day-Adventist Church (NAD) as the Year of Pastoral
359 Evangelism. Then a variety of people said we really needed to make
360 it the Year of Evangelism, so that you invite not only pastors, but
361 pastors and their members, to be involved in some kind of
362 evangelistic outreach. The NAD has set as a goal 100, 000 baptisms
363 during 2009 across North America. The highest that North America has
364 ever reached previously... is somewhere around 37, 000" (Planning for
365 a Harvest, *Adventist World-NAD*, May 2009, p. 25). As we exercise
366 faith, let us also **FIRST** heed calls for Holy Spirit revival.

367

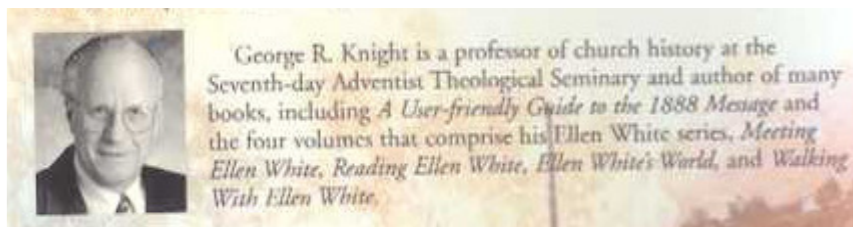
368 Church leaders have sounded the Holy Spirit alert. Ron E. M.
369 Clouzet's article: *We Have Circled This Mountain Long Enough* asked,
370 "...Is today's North America being 'scandalized' by our Adventist
371 message and mission? [According
372 to Ron], Research shows that
373 most people in North America
374 hardly notice that Adventists
375 exist. ...We still sing, '*Lift
376 Up the Trumpet and Loud Let it
377 Ring,*' but from singing to doing, there appears to be a clear gap.
378 [Therefore, Ron asserts], **SOMETHING IS NOT WORKING.** '...No part of
379 [the North American] division is being truly revolutionized for Jesus



Ron E. M. Clouzet is secretary of the North American Division Ministerial Association, director of the North American Division Institute of Evangelism (NADEI), and a professor of Christian Ministry and Pastoral Theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

386 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church' [because] '...hundreds of
387 churches—a sizable percentage of our Adventist communities—register
388 zero growth year after year. [Thus, Ron asked], 'Why are pastors by
389 the dozens unable to baptize a single soul, though in other ways be
390 faithful to their gospel call'? [Ron reminds us that] from the 1840s
391 through the 1870s [was] the period of our greatest growth rate"
392 (March 2008, Adventist-World-NAD, p. 13).

393
395 Clouzet is not a voice in the wilderness. Professor George R. Knight
397 applied the stages of
399 the human life cycle
401 from infancy to old age
403 to organizations. He
405 noted "...Adventism has not escaped that dynamic" [but was quick to
406 add] "that unlike individuals ...social organizations do not... have
407 to pass into the degenerative parts of the cycle,' [which, according
408 to Knight would be post] mid-1950s [for the Adventist Church] (A
409 Brief History of the Seventh-Day Adventist, 1999, p. 140-141).



411 **CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

412
413 Denominational affiliation alone is worthless, a guarantee to assure
414 fulfillment of, "...I never knew you: depart from me..." (Matthew
415 7:23). "The kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far
416 country, who, called his servants and delivered unto them his goods"
417 (Matthew 25:14). "The man traveling into a far country represents
418 Christ, who when speaking this parable was soon to depart from this
419 earth to heaven" (COL 325.3). "**THE TALENTS THAT CHRIST ENTRUSTS TO
420 HIS CHURCH REPRESENT THE GIFTS AND BLESSINGS IMPARTED BY THE HOLY
421 SPIRIT**" (COL 326.4). "... He has prepared... [the body as a house]
422 for the **MIND--A TEMPLE--FOR THE INDWELLING OF HIS HOLY SPIRIT**" (RC
423 149.2). "The mind controls the whole person" (CG 360.1). "We serve

424 the Lord with the mind" (4aSG 146.1) and "The Holy Spirit puts forth
425 its highest energies to work in [the] mind and heart" (AG 208.5). In
426 view of these truths, "Wonderful is the work which God designs to
427 accomplish through His servants [mind] that His name may be
428 glorified" (CH 209.2).

429
430 **"God's church is the court of Holy life, FILLED WITH VARIED GIFTS AND**
431 **ENDOWED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.** [His servants], **the members [of His**
432 **church] are to find their happiness in the happiness of those whom**
433 **they help and bless"** (AA 12.2). "Christ's followers have been
434 redeemed for service. ...By living to minister [to] others man is
435 brought into connection with Christ" (COL 326.3). "Care must be
436 taken that the religion of Christ be not made repulsive by harshness
437 or impatience. **The servant of God should... by meekness, gentleness**
438 **and love... represent our holy faith, [which occurs only as we are]**
439 **...imbued with the Spirit of Jesus [so that] the treasures of the**
440 **soul... [can flow] in words that will find their way to the hearts of**
441 **those who hear"** (4T, 547.1). "The truth is to be presented with
442 divine tact, tenderness and gentleness... from a heart that has been
443 softened and made sympathetic ...lest self rise up, as it did in
444 Jehu, and we pour forth a torrent of words that are ...not as dew
445 ...which revive the withering plants" (The Publishing Ministry, {PM}
446 307.1).

447
448 **"FAITH AND LOVE**—[the gold tried in the fire], how destitute are the
449 churches of these" (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, {TM}
450 149.1). "Lack of love and faith are the great sins of which God's
451 people are now guilty" (Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3, {3T}
452 474.3). **"PERSONAL RELIGION AMONG US AS A PEOPLE IS AT A LOW EBB.**
453 **THERE IS MUCH FORM, MUCH MACHINERY, MUCH TONGUE RELIGION; BUT**
454 **SOMETHING DEEPER AND MORE SOLID MUST BE BROUGHT INTO OUR RELIGIOUS**
455 **EXPERIENCE"** (5T 743.2). With the Holy Spirit, who alone imparts
456 faith and love (Romans 5:5 & Galatians 5:22), we "...Cultivate

457 kindness and tenderness, [so that the spirit of our service is]
458 ...courteous [and not] exacting, dictatorial [and] overbearing,
459 [with] ...more kindly sympathy [that] would give... access to hearts
460 and would win souls to Christ and the truth" (3T 417.2). For this
461 reason, "That [the disciples] might have success in their work they
462 were... given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or
463 human wisdom was the gospel... proclaimed but by the power of God"
464 (AA 17.1). "Each is to work in co-operation with Christ for the
465 salvation of souls. Not more surely is the place prepared for us in
466 the heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth
467 where we are to work for God" (COL 326.4). However, to do this work,
468 "There is... [need] for **DAILY CONVERSION TO GOD, A NEW, DEEP AND**
469 **DAILY EXPERIENCE IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE**" (CH 402.3). "To be a
470 Christian means to be a learner in the school of Christ. It means the
471 connecting of soul, mind and body with divine wisdom. When this
472 union exists between the soul and God, we are taught of God who gives
473 wisdom and knowledge" (That I May Know Him, {TMK} 160.5).

474
475 "Let the churches... advocating the law of God keep that law and
476 depart from all iniquity. Let the individual members of the church
477 resist the temptations to practice evils and indulge in sin. **LET THE**
478 **CHURCH COMMENCE THE WORK OF PURIFICATION BEFORE GOD BY REPENTANCE,**
479 **HUMILIATION, DEEP HEART SEARCHING** for we are in the antitypical day
480 of atonement" (2SM 378.1). "He who appreciates probationary time as
481 the preparatory school of life will use it to secure... title to the
482 heavenly mansions, membership in the higher school" (CT 21.1). The
483 first disciples purified themselves and revealed Christ and the Lord
484 worked with them confirming the word with signs following (Mark
485 16:20).

486
487 It is time for us to move our individual religious experience to a
488 higher level. **"A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest**
489 **and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first**

490 work" (LDE 189.1). "AFTER THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, the
491 disciples were so FILLED WITH LOVE for Him and for those for whom He
492 died, that HEARTS WERE MELTED BY THE WORDS THEY SPOKE AND THE PRAYERS
493 THEY OFFERED. THEY SPOKE IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT; AND UNDER THE
494 INFLUENCE OF THAT POWER, THOUSANDS WERE CONVERTED" (AA 22.2). So the
495 record states: "'With great power gave the apostles witness of the
496 resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them' (Acts
497 4:33). Under their labors... were added to the church chosen men,
498 who, receiving the word of life, consecrated their lives to the work
499 of GIVING TO OTHERS THE HOPE THAT HAD FILLED THEIR HEARTS WITH PEACE
500 AND JOY. They could not be restrained or intimidated by threats; the
501 Lord spoke through them; and, WHEREVER THEY WENT, THE SICK WERE
502 HEALED, AND THE POOR HAD THE GOSPEL PREACHED UNTO THEM" (Testimonies
503 for the Church, Volume 8, 8T 20.1). Let us not put the cart before
504 the horse or as author, Stephen Covey says, "First things First." **We**
505 **should first procure divine love in the heart before we seek to**
506 **evangelize** because "Love is the basis of godliness [AND] ...when
507 self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously" (Christ's
508 Object Lessons, {COL} 384.2).

509
510 "...None [will] share the "refreshing" unless they obtain victory over
511 every besetment, pride, selfishness, love of the world and every
512 wrong word and action. We should... be drawing nearer ...to the Lord
513 ...seeking that preparation... to stand in the battle in the day of the
514 Lord" (Early Writings, {EW} 71.2). "On every side we are beset by
515 invisible foes and we either conquer through the grace given us by
516 God or we are conquered" (Counsels on Diet and Foods, {CD} 453.3).
517 "... [We] battle for the right only through the help that God, by His
518 Spirit, gives [us]" (AA 31.1). "Judgment is now passing in the
519 sanctuary above [and] ...our lives are to come up in review. ...It
520 behooves every soul to... 'Watch and pray for [we] know not when the
521 time is' (Mark 13:33), [else, Christ will come on us as a thief comes
522 on the unguarded]" (read Rev. 3:3 in Lift Him Up, {LHU} 330.3). Dear

523 reader, believe Christ's word and promise and pray in faith (The
524 Desire of Ages, {DA} 827.1).

525

526 **The followers of Christ pattern after John or Judas, wheat or tares!**

527 Each of us has access to **DIVINE GRACE** that **TRANSFORMS CHARACTER**, but

528 while some... are learning of Jesus, daily dying to self, overcoming

529 sin and experiencing sanctification through the truth; others are

530 only hearing the word but resisting the transforming power of grace,

531 indulging selfish desires and coming into bondage to Satan (AA

532 558.1). Thus, "...**Many who bore Christ's name were not controlled by**

533 **His Spirit...**" (COL 122.2). "...Many... who teach the truth to others...

534 will not receive the seal of God... They... knew their master's will...

535 but had not corresponding works" (Testimonies for the Church, Volume

536 5, {5T} 213.2). "While they are professedly serving God they are to

537 all intents and purposes corrupting their ways before Him. Appetite

538 and passion... [rule] many, notwithstanding the clear light of truth

539 [that] points out danger and lifts its warning voice--Beware,

540 restrain [and] deny" (3T 474.3). Therefore, "God is sifting His

541 people [because] ...a corrupt people have arisen.... They despise

542 reproof and would not [accept correction] (read Proverbs 1:29-30).

543 They had time to repent... but self was too dear to die. They

544 nourished [self] and it grew strong... (Testimonies for the Church,

545 Volume 1, {1T} 99.3). Sadly, they did not "Turn... at [God's]

546 reproof [that He would] pour out [His] Spirit unto [them and] make

547 known [His] words unto [them]" (read Proverbs 1:23).

548

549 An unconsecrated people are holding back "The great outpouring of the

550 Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with [God's] glory

551 [Revelation 18:1]. [It] will not come until we have an **ENLIGHTENED**

552 **PEOPLE** that... have **ENTIRE, WHOLEHEARTED CONSECRATION TO THE SERVICE**

553 **OF CHRIST; [THEN]**, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of

554 His Spirit without measure..." (Counsels on Stewardship, {CS} 52.1).

555 And when God pours out His Spirit, the Spirit will bequeath **POWER**

556 (read John 1:12; Acts 1:8, 4:13 & 2 Peter 1:3) AND we shall be
557 witnesses for the Lord like first century disciples (read Acts 4:31 &
558 2 Corinthians 3:2-3, NIV). **"The Spirit animated them and spoke**
559 **through them.** The peace of Christ shone from their faces... and
560 their... features bore evidence to the surrender they had made (AA
561 46.1) AND **"No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own"**
562 (Acts 4:32, NIV).

563
564 "The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise
565 to send the Holy Spirit.... ...Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit
566 is... little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual
567 darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters
568 occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the
569 growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other
570 blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite
571 plenitude (AA 50.1). To escape the pronouncement of Matthew 7:22-23:
572 "...I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity," we are
573 reminded that **"It is through the Holy Spirit that every good work is**
574 **accomplished...**, [where] Jesus will be magnified, self will be
575 hidden and Christ will appear as all in all" (Conflict and Courage,
576 {CC} 365.4).

577
578 **"OUR GREAT NEED TODAY IS FOR [PEOPLE] WHO ARE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY**
579 **SPIRIT OF GOD..."** (PM 63.3). The Holy Spirit, God's "...Divine
580 power, [is not only] necessary for the growth and prosperity of the
581 church [but also for reception of] ...ALL other blessings..." (AA
582 50.1) such as the fruit of Spirit. **"IT IS THE ABSENCE OF THE HOLY**
583 **SPIRIT AND OF THE GRACE OF GOD THAT MAKES THE GOSPEL MINISTRY SO**
584 **POWERLESS TO CONVICT AND CONVERT"** (Testimonies for the Church, Volume
585 4, {4T} 378.1). "Learning, talent, eloquence [and] every natural or
586 acquired endowment may be possessed; but, **WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF THE**
587 **SPIRIT OF GOD, NO HEART WILL BE TOUCHED, NO SINNER WON TO CHRIST"**
588 (Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8, {8T} 21.4). "The promise of

589 the Spirit is not appreciated as it should be; its fulfillment is not
590 realized as it might be" (COL 328.1). In view of these things, a
591 call to action follows.

592

593 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO?**

594

595 "Everyone must now **search the Bible...** [2 Tim 2:15] upon [their]
596 knees... with the humble, teachable heart of a child, [to] **know what**
597 **the Lord requires...**" (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5 {5T} 214.1).
598 "**WHAT WE NEED IS TO KNOW GOD AND THE POWER OF HIS LOVE** ...by an
599 experimental knowledge. We must search the Scriptures diligently,
600 prayerfully; our understanding must be quickened by the Holy Spirit,
601 and our hearts must be uplifted to God in faith, hope and continual
602 praise" (5T 743.2). God wants us to walk humbly with him (Micah
603 6:8), but to do that, we need the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:25). "Are
604 we willing to be taught of God? Will we wrestle with God in prayer?
605 **...THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT...** is what we need and may have
606 [it] at this time and **THEN WE SHALL GO FORTH** with a message from the
607 Lord and the **LIGHT OF TRUTH WILL SHINE** as a lamp that burns reaching
608 to all parts of the world. **If we will walk humbly with God, God will**
609 **walk with us...**" (Fundamentals of Christian Education, {FE} 532.2).
610 Let us cease neglecting the preparation so needed at this time and
611 remember that God guides the humble in what is right and teaches them
612 His way (Psalms 25:9).

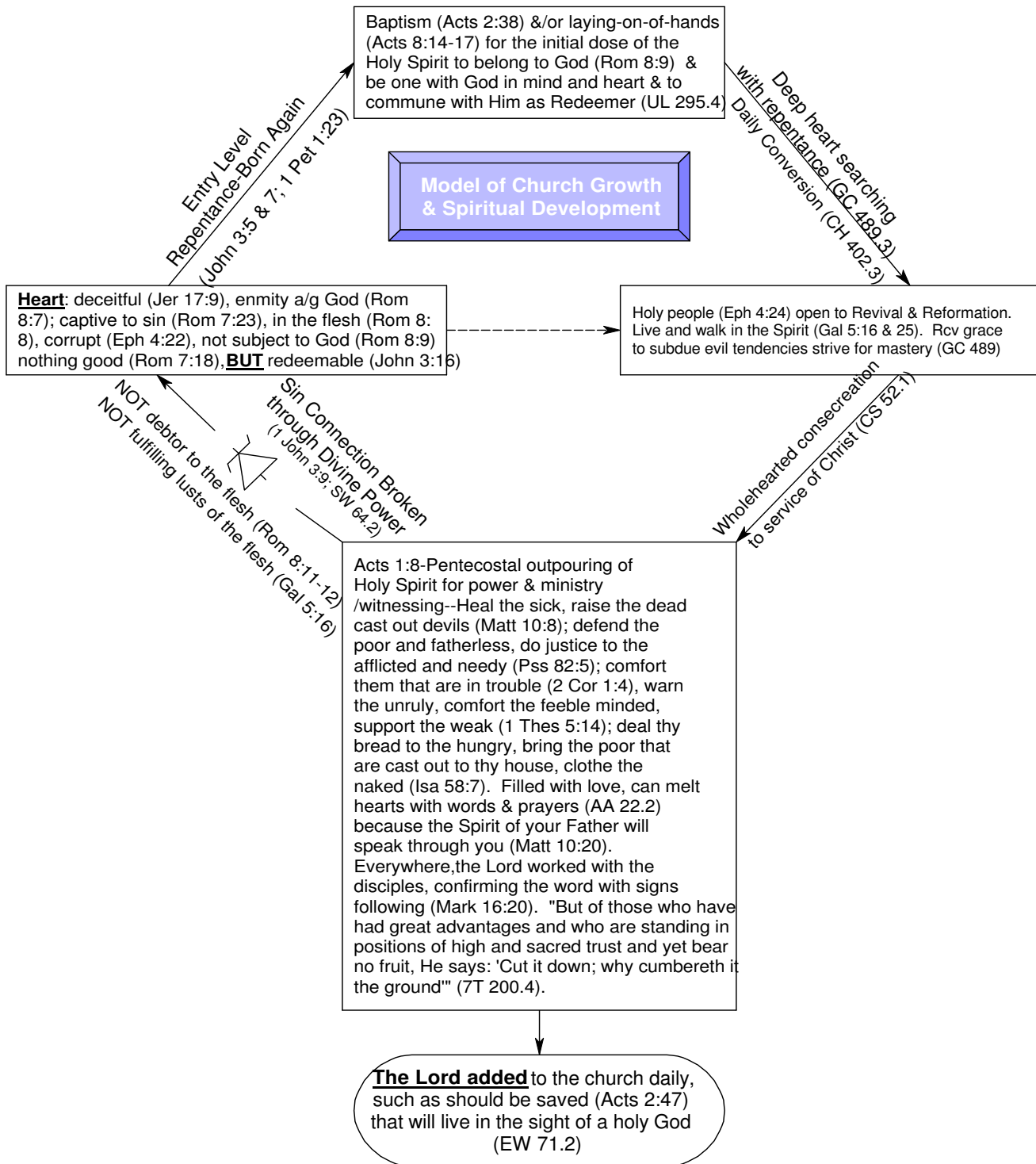
613

614 Everyone must pursue the Holy Spirit, the divine guide to truth (John
615 16:13). "[The] **...Holy Spirit... brings to our remembrance all the**
616 **promises [of] Christ... that we may have peace and a sweet sense of**
617 **forgiveness**" (Messages to Young People, {MYP} 107.1). He "**...Keeps**
618 **the mind stayed upon Christ that the thoughts and impulses may be of**
619 **a spiritual character.... [He]... enables [us] to put forth [our]**

620 **best energies as God [works] in [us] to will and to do of His own**
621 **good pleasure"** (Counsels on Sabbath School Work, {CSW} 158.1).
622 Every believer needs divine power (Acts 1:8, John 1:12 & 2 Peter
623 1:3). And when we fulfill the conditions for reception of the Holy
624 Spirit in latter rain measure, God will impart to us divine power to
625 resist "...**Evil that [has] been accumulating for centuries...**" (AA
626 47.1), especially "...In the... [period] of atonement [in which we
627 are now living]. ...All who would have their names retained in the
628 book of life should... afflict their souls before God by sorrow for
629 sin and true repentance; there must be deep, faithful searching of
630 heart" (The Great Controversy, {GC} 489.3). "Earnest, persevering
631 **supplication** to God in faith **that leads to** ENTIRE DEPENDENCE upon God
632 and UNRESERVED CONSECRATION TO HIS WORK... [will] bring... the Holy
633 Spirit's aid..." (DA 431.2). "...To serve [God] right, we must be
634 born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the
635 mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will
636 give us willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true
637 worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit" (DA
638 189.2). The diagram that follows encapsulates the discussion above.

639 **MODEL OF CHURCH GROWTH & SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

640



641

642 **REFLECTIVE CONTEMPLATION FOR PERSONAL EXAMINATION**

643
644 "The spirit and grace of Christ are needed in the life" (1SM 224.5).

645 "...Keep the grace of Christ ever in the heart to battle inward
646 corruptions and outward temptations (CC 197.2) to "...Preserve our
647 bodies holy, our spirits pure... [and to] stand... unstained amid
648 teeming corruptions..." (CH 44.2). "...By confession..., forsaking
649 sin, earnest prayer and consecration... to God the early disciples
650 prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The same work...
651 must [occur] now. ...**ONLY THOSE WHO ARE LIVING UP TO THE LIGHT THEY
652 HAVE WILL RECEIVE GREATER LIGHT. UNLESS WE ARE DAILY ADVANCING IN...**

653 **CHRISTIAN VIRTUES** [of 2 Peter 1:5-9], we shall not recognize the
654 manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain, [which will
655 fall] on hearts all around us but we shall not discern or receive it"
656 (FLB 333.6; TM 507.1), despite talking about the Spirit (FLB 53.5).
657 We can no longer lack the grace of God and consecration (1T 383.1).

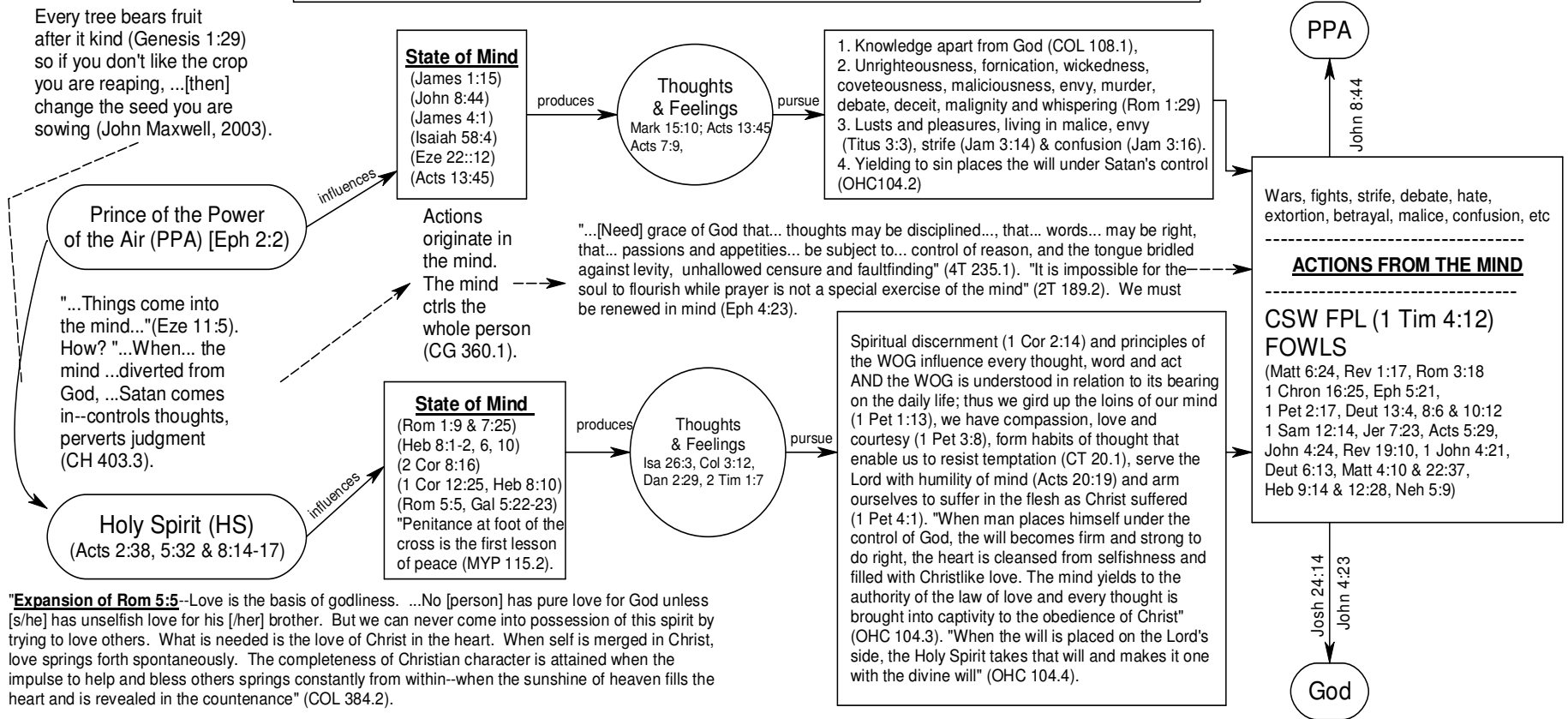
658
659 "The **LATTER RAIN...** **REPRESENTS** the spiritual **GRACE** that prepares the
660 church for the coming of [Jesus]" (LDE 183.1). And if the latter rain
661 can fall unrecognized on hearts all around us and we not receive it,
662 then Matthew 25:1-10 will be repeated among 21st century church
663 attendees. Therefore, to come into one accord, "His providence
664 [must] unite hearts in bonds... of heavenly origin... [that] bear
665 wear, test and trial" (The Adventist Home, {AH} 112.4). "[We] must
666 give [our] heart to Jesus and **WALK IN** the... light of **TRUTH...**" (AH}
667 298.1). "All who are **CONSECRATED TO GOD WILL BE CHANNELS OF
668 LIGHT...**" (Christian Service, {ChS} 21.4) for "He commissions His
669 angels to render divine help to every soul that comes to Him in
670 repentance and contrition and He comes personally by His Holy Spirit
671 into the midst of His church" (Christian Experience and Teachings of
672 E.G.W., {CET} 206.2). "The lamp of the soul must... **HAVE THE OIL OF
673 GRACE...** **LEST THE DAY OF THE LORD OVERTAKE US AS A THIEF**" (ChS 85.3).

674 **OPEN BOOK QUIZ FOR REINFORCEMENT OF CONTENT**

675

- 676 1. What will bring the aid of the Holy Spirit?
- 677 2. What happens when the need of the Holy Spirit is unrecognized?
- 678 3. Under what conditions might Christ's followers battle for right?
- 679 4. God's church, the court of holy life, bears two important
680 elements. Name them!
- 681 5. What does Satan fear the most about the church of Christ?
- 682 6. Our churches have many "good" programs and "good" people, yet,
683 the churches are destitute, i.e., lacking _____ and _____.
- 684 7. When and only when will our prayers ascend to God with strong,
685 earnest faith that we may wait with patience and hope for the
686 Holy Spirit?
- 687 8. What methods, i.e., ways fulfill the conditions upon which God
688 has promised to grant outpouring of the Holy Spirit?
- 689 9. When and only when does the grace of God work in us to deny old
690 inclinations, to overcome powerful propensities and to form new
691 habits that we might become the new creature discussed in 2
692 Corinthians 5:17?
- 693 10. The talents/gifts and blessings that Christ entrusts to His
694 church are received through the _____.

The Power that Influences the Mind Governs Thoughts, Feelings & Actions/Behaviors



695