

“Communicate God’s Truth in Love and Illuminate the Earth
with God’s Glory”

2013 Annual Council

October 12, 2013

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Word Total: 4499

Revelation 18:1-4 ---“After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.’ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.’”

God has called the Seventh-day Adventist Church to a unique mission to communicate to the world His great message of salvation in the context of Revelation 14. He wants people to know that Christ, our Savior and our Righteousness, is ministering as High Priest in the most holy place of the real heavenly sanctuary and that He is coming soon. We are called to prepare the world for the final judgment that is coming in the very near future! He wants us to share the marvelous news of His righteousness and that religious organizations have turned from true Biblical worship and have fallen from God's plan. He wants us to turn people back to Him and true worship which involves following what He said. He asks us to participate in calling people out of Babylon into God's full truth honoring and accepting His authority as Creator and accepting His Sabbath seal as our testimony to the world that we love and honor Him. All of this is the unique message given to Seventh-day Adventists encompassing the three angels'

messages of Revelation 14 and the fourth angel of Revelation 18.

The Great Controversy, page 452 explains, “When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator’s memorial and the sign of His authority.”

The three angels are joined by the fourth angel about which we just read to re-enforce the urgency of turning towards the true worship of God. Never before has this description of God’s mission for His church and the condition of the world been more unmistakably applicable than today. We are living in the end of time. The messages in Revelation 14 and 18 are set in the development of Revelation 13 which describes the beast and then another beast which gives power to develop the

image to the beast. In the last few months we have seen that the prophecy of Revelation 13 is as real and alive as when our pioneers preached about it. If ever there was a time and need to be urgently about our work, it is NOW! Through the power of the fourth angel, we are to communicate God's truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory.

Last week we participated in the dynamic International Urban Mission Conference designed to have divisions, unions, local fields, and churches put into action Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy plans for "Mission to the Cities" in the largest urban centers of this globe. How exciting to hear about the comprehensive urban evangelism that has, is or will be taking place in Sydney, New York, Lagos, Tokyo, Mumbai, London, Kinshasa, Cairo, Kiev, Buenos Aires, Manila, Luanda, Geneva, Mexico City and many other cities. This all takes place under the overall strategic plan of "Tell the World"-----Revival and

reformation is the foundation of our strategic plan and will continue until Jesus returns. It is our greatest personal and corporate need. Revival and reformation opens our eyes to God's command for "Mission to the Cities" using every method of Jesus including Comprehensive Health Ministry which is a vital part of the end-time loud cry. It is all integrated and connected. We are carrying out God's mandate to His church of communicating truth in love to illuminate the earth with God's glory. A few months ago, I received an encouraging email from Norbert Zens, treasurer of the Inter-European Division with church business information. But Norbert took time to include what he had read that morning in the Review and Herald of June 4, 1889, where Ellen White writes, "There is a great work to be done for our time, and we do not half realize what the Lord is willing to do for His people." Let's wake up to how God wants to communicate His truth and love through us in illuminating the earth with His glory.

But.....what are we actually communicating and how are we communicating? As Seventh-day Adventists, we are called to be a part of the message of that fourth angel of Revelation 18---an angel that comes down with great power to proclaim the truth. We are to communicate in every way possible---through print, through digital and electronic methods, through media including television/radio/internet/social media, through personal witness and outreach, and through public evangelism.

The publishing work is doing this in a powerful way. We are told in Publishing Ministry, page 388, “.....in a large degree through our publishing houses is to be accomplished the work of that other angel who comes down from heaven with great power and who lightens the earth with his glory.”

Even though the publishing industry today is very unsettled because of the internet and changes in reading patterns, the publishing work is to be one of the greatest methods to the end of time in communicating God's truth in love to illuminate the earth with God's glory. We praise God for how He has used the entire world church to distribute over 120 million printed copies and 26 million internet downloads of various versions of "The Great Controversy" during 2012 and 2013. During this Annual Council, we will praise God for His blessing in this great seed-sowing activity. Thank you for participating with heaven to illuminate this earth with God's glory. This massive evangelistic outreach will bear fruit and already has with new members joining God's remnant church. God will help us to more strongly illuminate the earth with God's glory through the printed and electronic page.

The Communication Department is daily involved in many media activities including the internet to communicate God's truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory. It is part of that fourth angel of Revelation 18 providing incredible opportunities to touch lives around the world. Next week during Annual Council we will debut "The Creation---The Earth Is A Witness"-----a General Conference Creation Project coordinated by the Communication Department. Local churches and the church's media will use this new creation video in outreach events to the community. At the end of the Creation Video, local Seventh-day Adventist churches will introduce people to many more follow up programs leading to more direct evangelistic activities and meetings. These programs will draw people closer to Jesus and His truth and illuminate the earth with God's glory.

The Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department is engaged in multiple methods of helping church members interact and share the Advent message illuminating the earth with God's glory.

The Health Ministries Department is helping every church to become a community health center and all church members to be part of comprehensive health ministry to illuminate the earth with God's glory.

The Ministerial Association is helping us focus on revival and reformation, Mission to the Cities and so many more ways to illuminate the earth with God's glory.

Women's Ministries, Children's Ministries, Youth Ministries, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, Education Department, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department, Stewardship Ministries and Planned Giving and Trust Services are all

participating in integrated evangelism. I have recently had consultations with each of our departments and am proud of them as they engage church members in active witnessing for the Lord to communicate God's truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory.

Our services and agencies such as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Adventist Health International, Adventist Heritage Ministry, Adventist Mission, Adventist Review, Adventist Risk Management, Adventist World Radio, Auditing Service, Biblical Research Institute, Christian Record Services for the Blind, Geoscience Research Institute, Hope Channel, Institute of World Mission, International Health and Temperance Association, International Religious Liberty Association, Office of Archives, Statistics and Research and others are active with the one purpose of communicating God's truth in love and illuminating the earth with God's glory.

Our General Conference institutions including Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Adventist University of Africa, Andrews University, Loma Linda University, Oakwood University, Pacific Press, and Review and Herald are all to be focused on training and working to communicate God's truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory.

Presidential, Secretariat, and Treasury have but one reason to exist----to coordinate the communication of God's truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory. Divisions, unions, local conferences, institutions, organizations, local churches, and every member are to allow the Holy Spirit to work through us to illuminate the earth with God's glory. Let us rejoice that we all have the same goal and are unified in this objective wherever we are.

Mike Ryan, responsible for strategic planning and the coordinator of our recent wonderful International Urban Mission Conference, recently told me about how God's leading in Juba, South Sudan, where every member of the church has a job in mission. They had 8 congregations and were in the midst of planting 12 more. There was unusual excitement among the members. They all knew about the goal of 12 new churches and had made commitments to have a part in reaching the goal. Assignments were given and they were moving like a well-trained unit. God rewarded this evangelistic commitment and, praise God, the 12 church plants now exist..... and are supported by a church-run FM station.....the only FM station in the entire city! Let's be proactive in planning programs and activities where every member can use their spiritual gifts in communicating God's truth!

However, let's review what it is that we are communicating---- whether in the rural areas or in Mission to the Cities or in any activity of the church and its organizations.

We have been promoting and earnestly seeking revival and reformation through the power of the Holy Spirit. We just finished a powerful set of lessons last quarter in the Adult Bible Study Guide by Mark Finley. What a blessing to study God's Word and realize we are totally dependent on Christ's justifying and sanctifying power in our lives. What a blessing to have Sabbath School. In some parts of the world Sabbath School is growing and in other parts it needs an enthusiastic reset. My fellow leaders, let's make Sabbath School one of the most successful evangelistic outreach activities in the Seventh-day Adventist Church! If it is not vibrant in your part of the world, rejuvenate it and make it the nurturing and evangelistic tool it was meant to be by focusing on Bible study and

outreach. But back to revival and reformation----are we really succeeding in allowing God to revive us and reform and change us so we truly can illuminate the earth with God's glory? This is our destiny and it is linked to humbling ourselves before God and realizing our complete need of Him. The Great Controversy, page 464 states, "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word."

Are we spending time with Jesus every day to allow His character to become ours as we become more and more like Him through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Are we truly dependent on the Lord and read His Scriptures to be daily

revived by His Word? The Great Controversy, page 478, tells us, "It is only as the law of God is restored to its rightful position that there can be a revival of primitive faith and godliness among His professed people."

Are we involved in earnest prayer pleading for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit at seven in the morning or seven at night or anytime? Are we standing for pure Biblical truth and God's law in the face of public intimidation and political correctness? Are we trusting in the sure word of prophecy understanding that Daniel and Revelation are books that must be proclaimed with clarity at this hour of God's judgment? Are we standing for the historicist understanding of prophetic interpretation and refuting preterism and futurism? Are we firm in our resolve to use only the historical-biblical method of interpreting Scripture and resisting any inroads in our churches and educational institutions towards a higher-critical approach?

The Great Controversy, page 465 counsels, "In the truths of His word, God has given to men a revelation of Himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. It is a neglect of these truths that has opened the door to the evils which are now becoming so widespread in the religious world.....A wrong conception of the character, the perpetuity, and the obligation of the divine law has led to errors in relation to conversion and sanctification, and has resulted in lowering the standard of piety in the church. Here is to be found the secret of the lack of the Spirit and power of God in the revivals of our time."

Are we refusing to be misled by mystical practices and beliefs that are pervading Christianity? Are we resisting the ever-present urge to make our organizations and institutions bigger and better by conforming to worldly standards of "greatness" rather than the simple, humble approach God has asked us to

follow? Are we allowing the pressures of society and political correctness to push us in directions in opposition to Biblical principles? Are we enamored by personal wealth and ease of life rather than personal sacrifice and humility? Are we trivializing life by wasting time in self-centered, egotistical activities. The Great Controversy, page 470 exhorts us, “Those who experience the sanctification of the Bible will manifest a spirit of humility. Like Moses, they have had a view of the awful majesty of holiness, and they see their own unworthiness in contrast with the purity and exalted perfection of the Infinite One.”

Are we communicating to the world a different message than we intend by how we personally use the internet, by what we watch on television, by what we wear, by how we use our time, by what kind of music we listen to or by our worship style? Selected Messages, Book II, page 36, explains certain things

that took place in the past would take place at the end of time. “The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time.”

Recognizing the world is full of various cultures, let's worship in simplicity and in truth using the Word of God and aligning ourselves with the culture of heaven. We've been called to proclaim the three angels' messages and participate with the

fourth angel to illuminate the earth with God's glory, but are we doing that?

Let's look at several passages in the small epistle of Jude to discover how to truly communicate in love the three angels' messages and the message of that fourth angel.

Verses 3-4, "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

God, through Jude, admonishes us to be serious about our faith and what we believe earnestly defending our faith as we communicate God's truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory. Let's stand for the great Biblical truths that have made the Seventh-day Adventist message what it is. Do not bend with any wind of doctrine that flows through the church which is not founded on those great Biblical injunctions, "It is written" and "Thus saith the Lord." There are those in the church and outside the church who wish to change the very beliefs we have held sacred and change the character of the Seventh-day Adventist Church itself----people who want to turn the grace of God into something vile thus denying Jesus Himself even though they pretend to lift up His name.

Recognize the 28 fundamental beliefs and truths of this church to be Christ-centered and completely Biblically-based. Guard and preserve the precious Advent message with your life-----it

will provide you with life now and throughout eternity because it is the Word of the Lord who was made flesh-----this is Jesus' Advent message. As we communicate truth to those who do not know Christ, we must guard against the world entering the church neutralizing its mission. Testimonies to Ministers, page 265, "The world must not be introduced into the church, and married to the church, forming a bond of unity. Through this means the church will become indeed corrupt, and as stated in Revelation, 'a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.' Through association with the world our institutions will become unsubstantial, unreliable; because these worldly elements, introduced and placed in positions of trust, are looked up to as teachers to be respected in their educating, directing, and official position and they are sure to be worked upon by the spirit and power of darkness....." Let's make sure that this does not happen in our lives, in our churches, in our organizations or in our institutions.

Verses 5-8 says, "But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries." God wants us to honor Him and accept His loving mercies toward us. The Israelites who turned on the Lord were destroyed and the angels who rejected their Master will be destroyed as will those also who practice immorality as Sodom and Gomorrah did. The acquiescence to homosexuality that is

pervading so many societies today is nothing more than the old immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah that is in complete opposition to God's Holy Word and, according to the Bible, will result in not receiving eternal life for those who reject God's loving and saving efforts to turn them away from sinful behavior. The Lord also speaks strongly against those who ignore or resist heaven-directed authority. God's warnings are for all of us regardless of what type of sin since we are all sinners and in need of a Savior. Whatever our sins are, if we come to Christ and humbly fall at the foot of the cross in repentance, He will forgive us, cleanse us of all unrighteousness and give us victory over sin through His power! It is of utmost importance that we stay close to God and be grounded in His truth otherwise we will fail to communicate truth in love and illuminate the earth with God's glory. As we approach the end of time, we are told in Testimonies to Ministers, pages 270-271, that "There are only two classes in

our world; those who are obedient to Jesus Christ, who seek the Master to do His will, and work for the attainment of the salvation of their own souls and the soul of everyone who is associated with them who names the name of Christ and the children of disobedience.” Let’s obey God’s instructions for us as His people as we communicate God’s truth in love and illuminate the earth with God’s glory.

Verse 12 indicates that there are misguided people who “are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves.” Jude likens them to clouds without water, trees without fruit, raging waves, wandering stars. He says in verse 16 that “These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.” Verses 18-19 show “there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly

lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.”

As we communicate God’s truth in love and illuminate the earth with God’s glory, the devil will try to bring in dividing questions and preoccupations through grumblers and complainers who will cause divisions. Testimonies to Ministers, page 270 laments, “How pitiable and sad to see men who have known something of the Spirit of God fall so completely into the arms of the world as to be swayed and influenced by its voice, and depend upon its favors for strength and success! How manifestly such are alienated from Christ, how full of self-confidence, how full of vaunting, of vanity, and how shortsighted in regard to spirituality!”

Jude gives us the key to being able to communicate God’s truth in love and illuminate the earth with God’s glory. Verses 20-21

urge us “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

As we communicate God’s truth in love and illuminate the earth with God’s glory preparing others and ourselves for Christ’s soon coming, let us not allow anyone at any time to turn us from the time-honored and rock-solid Biblical truths which we as Seventh-day Adventists have believed. If you have accepted the precious Advent message that thrills our hearts and have stood by the truth in the past, do not be tempted to change in the least unless you read a “Thus saith the Lord.”

Don’t do it.....South American Division, Inter-American Division, North American Division, Trans-European Division, Inter-European Division, Euro-Asia Division, Middle East and North Africa Union, Israel Field, West-Central Africa Division,

East-Central Africa Division, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean
Division, Southern Asia Division, Northern Asia-Pacific
Division, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, South Pacific
Division.....Communicate God's truth in love and illuminate
the earth with God's glory as we approach Christ's soon second
coming.

Jude beautifully concludes his epistle by bringing glory to God.
Verses 24-25 share that crescendo of glory declaring who it is
that we are to lean on and cherish as the One who saves us,
justifies us, sanctifies us, nurtures us, and helps us to
communicate God's great truth in love and succeed in
illuminating the earth with God's glory. "Now to Him who is
able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless
before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our
Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and
power, both now and forever, Amen." What a glorious way in

which to illuminate the earth with God's glory! On a recent trip to Tahiti, I received a precious note from eight-year old Menahere who is illuminating the earth with God's glory: "I am very happy to see you.....and to tell you that I love you and wish you a good trip.....I ask you to please pray for my family and particularly for my brother.....who left the church and for my father.....who is not an Adventist. I am eight years old and I believe in God, with my mama.....I thank you and I think about you in my prayers." What faith and commitment on the part of eight year-old Menahere. Where is our faith and commitment to communicate God's truth in love? Is it strong in the Lord or neutralized by the devil?

As we come to the end of time realizing the devil is making every effort to confuse our message and mission, let us rest firmly on God's Word and promises to make us truly His messengers. Acts of Apostles, page 600, "Christ has given to

the church a sacred charge. Every member should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that the Saviour desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and His character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All heaven is waiting for men and women through whom God can reveal the power of Christianity."

Are you that man or that woman today? Am I? Are you willing to allow God to communicate His truth and love through you thus illuminating the earth with His glory as you lift up Christ, His righteousness, His sanctuary service, His Sabbath, His three angels' messages, His message through the fourth angel and His soon return? Will you accept that "sacred charge" and open your life to complete control by the Lord in

accomplishing His mission as we approach the end of time? If so, please stand with me right now in complete commitment and humility before the One who is able keep you from falling and stumbling.....The One Who alone is wise and the One to whom we give glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and forever--Jesus Christ, Our Lord!

(Pray together)

