



INQUIRY

1. What are the most extreme steps you've taken to focus on a task or goal?
2. How do people try to manipulate others based on their immediate needs?
3. Why may we be at our most vulnerable as we prepare to take on new responsibilities?
4. What distractions may keep you from focusing on your true calling?

INQUEST

At His baptism in the Jordan river, the Spirit of God came down to Jesus in the form of a dove. "This is my Son," God proclaimed, "whom I love; I am so pleased with Him!" But if that sounds like the perfect launching point for three years of ministry and miracles, well, Jesus may have been the Word made flesh, but He didn't always do things by the book. Instead, Jesus hiked into the wilderness, alone. He was led by the Holy Spirit. He was headed for a duel with the devil.

For forty days Jesus devoted Himself to prayer and fasting, communicating with His Father. As His physical strength eroded, His spiritual strength increased.

And then the devil showed up, hoping to catch Jesus off guard and knock Him off course. All he had to do was break the trust and connection between Jesus and His Father. He'd tempt Jesus the same way he'd swindled Adam and Eve: through appetite. "If you're God's Son," said the devil, "why don't you just make yourself some bread from these stones?"

Satan's sly suggestion struck at the heart of Jesus' motivation. Though Jesus would later feed thousands with a few loaves and fishes, He would not perform any miracle just to prove Himself—or save Himself. He quoted Scripture: "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Jesus answered each lure, each temptation to use His power for selfish ends or submit to the devil's authority, with words from the Bible. The devil quoted scripture himself, just as he'd twisted God's words in Eden, and Jesus responded with another Bible text.

Ephesians 6:12 tells us, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Our everyday choices have eternal consequences.

In His earthly ministry, Jesus faced attacks from all sides. One of the biggest points of contention was over the Sabbath. Religious tradition had shaped Sabbath-keeping into merely a sterile, exhausting exercise in work avoidance. Jesus sought to transform their understanding of the Sabbath to one of service, restoration, and renewal. Read Mark 2:23-27.

1. The gospels feature numerous stories about Sabbath-keeping. Do they focus on whether or not to keep the Sabbath, or do they take Sabbath-keeping for granted and focus on how best to keep it?
2. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). The Greek word in the text is anthropos, meaning all of humanity, not just a select group. Read Mark 3:1-6. What message does Jesus underline about Sabbath-keeping in this story?
3. How might we honor the Sabbath according to Jesus' principle in this story?

Read Luke 14:1-5.

1. Why was the crowd watching Jesus so intently?
2. Why did Jesus' questions leave his hosts tongue tied?
3. What truths about their motivations did Jesus show them?

Read John 5:1-18.

1. What did Jesus' healing of someone who didn't even know of Him demonstrate?
2. How did the religious leaders define Sabbathkeeping?
3. How did Jesus believe the Sabbath was best honored?

CROSS-EXAMINATION

"Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel."

1. Read Exodus 20:8-11. What is the meaning of the Sabbath?
2. Read Deuteronomy 5:12-15. What comparison is there between God rescuing the Israelites from Egypt, described in these verses, and Jesus saving us from sin?
3. What does the Sabbath tell us about the character of God?

"Men who have little of the learning of the schools are sometimes called to declare the truth, not because they are unlearned, but because they are not too self-sufficient to be taught of God. Their humility and obedience make them great."

1. What qualities make for a strong advocate for God? What does it mean to be spiritually self-sufficient?
2. Read James 4:7-10, written to a "double-minded," hypocritical group of people. What does it mean for us to "humble ourselves"?

"We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God. To men of principle, faith, and daring, the world is indebted for its great reforms. By such men the work of reform for this time must be carried forward."

1. What wrong motivations have people used for "doing right"?
2. What personal qualities are necessary to stand on principle regardless of consequence?
3. What reform would you like to see in this world?

Chapter 8— *In Defense of the Truth*

The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator. "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Psalm 100:3; 95:6.

In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator and keep the commandments of God. One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:10, 11. Concerning the Sabbath, the Lord says, further, that it is "a sign, . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." Ezekiel 20:20. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.

Restoration of the Truth

Sabbath reform in the last days is foretold in Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. . . . The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, everyone that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer." Isaiah 56:1, 2, 6, 7.

These words apply in the Christian age, as shown by the context (verse 8). Here is foreshadowed the gathering in of the Gentiles by the gospel, when His servants preach to all nations the glad tidings.

The Lord commands, "Seal the law among my disciples." Isaiah 8:16. The seal of God's law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. 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 as the Creator's memorial and sign of His authority.

Protestants now urge that the resurrection of Christ on Sunday made it the Christian Sabbath. But no such honor was given to the day by Christ or His apostles. The observance of Sunday had its origin in that "mystery of lawlessness" (2 Thessalonians 2:7, RV) which, even in Paul's day, had begun its work. What reason can be given for a change which the Scriptures do not sanction?

Protestants acknowledge "the complete silence of the New Testament so far as any explicit command for the Sabbath [Sunday, the first day of the week] or definite rules for its observance are concerned."¹

"Up to the time of Christ's death, no change had been made in the day"; and, "so far as the record shows, they [the apostles] did not . . . give any explicit command enjoining

* This change is described in chapter 3 of *The Great Controversy*.

the abandonment of the seventh day Sabbath, and its observance on the first day of the week."²

Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church, and declare that Protestants, by observing Sunday, recognize her power. The statement is made: "During the old law, Saturday was the day sanctified; but *the Church*, instructed by Jesus Christ, and directed by the Spirit of God, has substituted Sunday for Saturday; so now we sanctify the first, not the seventh day. Sunday means, and now is, the day of the Lord."³

The command is given: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression." Those whom the Lord designates as "my people" are to be reprov'd for their transgressions, a class who think themselves righteous in the service of God. But the solemn rebuke of the Searcher of hearts proves them to be trampling upon the divine precepts. Isaiah 58:1, 2.

The prophet thus points out the ordinance which has been forsaken: "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Isaiah 58:12-14.

The "breach" was made in the law of God when the Sabbath was changed by the Roman power. But the time has come for the breach to be repaired.

The Sabbath was kept by Adam in his innocence in Eden; by Adam, fallen yet repentant, when driven from his estate. It was kept by all the patriarchs from Abel to Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob. When the Lord delivered Israel, He proclaimed His law to the multitude.

True Sabbath Always Kept

From that day to the present the Sabbath has been kept. Though the "man of sin" succeeded in trampling underfoot God's holy day, yet hidden in secret places faithful souls paid it honor. Since the Reformation, some in every generation have maintained its observance.

These truths in connection with "the everlasting gospel" will distinguish the church of Christ at the time of His appearing. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12.

Those who received the light concerning the sanctuary* and the law of God were filled with joy as they saw the harmony of truth. They desired the light to be imparted to all Christians. But truths at variance with the world were not welcome to many who claimed to follow Christ.

As the claims of the Sabbath were presented, many said: "We have always kept Sunday, our fathers kept it, and many good men have died happy while keeping it. The keeping of a new Sabbath would throw us out of harmony with the world. What can a little company keeping the seventh day accomplish against all the world who are keeping Sunday?" By similar arguments the Jews justified their rejection of Christ. So, in the time of Luther, papists reasoned that true Christians had died in the Catholic faith; therefore

* See chapters 23 and 24 of *The Great Controversy*.

that religion was sufficient. Such reasoning would prove a barrier to all advancement in faith.

Many urged that Sundaykeeping had been a widespread custom of the church for centuries. Against this argument it was shown that the Sabbath and its observance were more ancient, even as old as the world itself—established by the Ancient of Days.

In the absence of Bible testimony, many urged: "Why do not our great men understand this Sabbath question? Few believe as you do. It cannot be that you are right and all the men of learning are wrong."

To refute such arguments it was needful only to cite the Scriptures and the Lord's dealings with His people in all ages. The reason why He does not more often choose men of learning and position to lead out in reform is that they trust to their creeds and theological systems and feel no need to be taught of God. Men who have little of the learning of the schools are sometimes called to declare the truth, not because they are unlearned, but because they are not too self-sufficient to be taught of God. Their humility and obedience make them great.

Faith and Courage

It was not the will of God that Israel should wander forty years in the wilderness; He desired to lead them directly to Canaan and establish them there, a holy, happy people. But "they could not enter in because of unbelief." Hebrews 3:19. In like manner, it was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be so long delayed and His people remain so many years in this world of sin and sorrow. Unbelief separated them from God. In mercy to the world, Jesus delays His coming, that sinners may hear the warning and find shelter before the wrath of God shall be poured out.

Now as in former ages, the presentation of truth will excite opposition. Many with malice assail the character and motives of those who stand in defense of unpopular truth. Elijah was declared a troubler in Israel, Jeremiah a traitor, Paul a polluter of the temple. From that day to this, those who would be loyal to truth have been denounced as seditious, heretical, or schismatic.

The confession of faith made by saints and martyrs, those examples of holiness and steadfast integrity, inspires courage in those who are now called to stand as witnesses for God. To the servant of God at this time is the command addressed: "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." Isaiah 58:1; Ezekiel 33:7.

The great obstacle to the acceptance of truth is the fact that it involves inconvenience and reproach. This is the only argument against the truth which its advocates have never been able to refute. But true followers of Christ do not wait for truth to become popular. They accept the cross, with the apostle Paul counting that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; with one of old, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." 2 Corinthians 4:17; Hebrews 11:26.

We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God. To men of principle, faith, and daring, the world is indebted for its great reforms. By such men the work of reform for this time must be carried forward.

¹ George Elliott, *The Abiding Sabbath*, p. 184.

² A. E. Waffle, *The Lord's Day*, pp. 186-188.

³ *Catholic Catechism of Christian Religion*.

Sources

In the list below, under each chapter in the current work are listed the source chapters in *The Great Controversy* that correspond to it:

Chapter 1, “Why Is There Suffering?”

The Great Controversy, chapter 29

Chapter 2, “Hope for Triumph Over Evil”

The Great Controversy, chapters 30, 31

Chapter 3, “Dangerous Seductions”

The Great Controversy, chapter 32

Chapter 4, “Everlasting Life”

The Great Controversy, chapter 33

Chapter 5, “False Hope”

The Great Controversy, chapter 34

Chapter 6, “True Peace”

The Great Controversy, chapters 7, 27

Chapter 7, “Our Only Safeguard”

The Great Controversy, chapter 37

Chapter 8, “In Defense of the Truth”

The Great Controversy, chapters 3, 25, 26

Chapter 9, “Real Hope”

The Great Controversy, chapters 1, 17, 36, 38, 39

Chapter 10, “The Great Rescue”

The Great Controversy, chapter 40

Chapter 11, “Victory of Love”

The Great Controversy, chapter 42

A revealing
look at the
battle between
good and
evil — and
who wins.

The

Great

Hope





Younger Generation Church

YG is the vibrant young adult ministry of the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our mission is to deepen our devotion to Christ Jesus by pursuing INTIMACY with GOD, experiencing COMMUNITY with each other, and inspiring those around us with the HOPE of GRACE. www.YGchurch.com



How it all began

YG began just after the turn of the century as a high-energy, contemporary worship service highlighting multimedia, upbeat music, and timely, creative messages – all focused on reaching young adults. Today, YG transcends age and program boundaries, making authentic efforts to foster the great commandment and great commission in new generations. www.vimeo.com/channels/ygchurch



Intimacy

We are wholeheartedly pursuing a 24/7 experience of the living GOD. Our worship is for His fame. Each week Younger Generation Church offers a powerful worship experience, Saturday mornings, 10:15 am [Central], where we authentically gather to focus our attention and adoration on Christ Jesus. www.YGchurch.com



Community

We express best who GOD is by doing life together well. Our relationships express His love. Younger Generation Church enjoys LIFEgroups affording our members an opportunity to build inspiring community and foster healthy relationships. We love having fun and taking time to enjoy each other's company. www.facebook.com/ygchurch



Grace

We are compelled to share the hope we have with others. Our compassionate witness reveals His Good News as real. Younger Generation Church generously shares the grace of Jesus Christ with whomever we might serve. Feeding the hungry, encouraging the orphan, consoling the widow—being grace dispensers to the least of these bring us joy. @YGChurch