

JULY 29, 1943

mother goes out to seek additional funds by her personal labor.

Back of almost every delinquent child stands the record of parents who have been delinquent in their responsibility to their children. The importance of child training cannot be overemphasized. Seventh-day Adventist mothers today should become deeply conscious of the great importance of family life and the tremendous responsibility God has placed upon them in guiding the feet of the young into the paths of rectitude and truth.

The psalmist declares, "Thy children" shall be

"like olive plants round about thy table." Ps. 128: 3. They are a heritage from the Lord. When their lives are entrusted into our care, it is a most holy and sacred trust which we cannot treat with impunity. Someday we must give an account to the great Author of life when at His judgment seat He shall inquire of us as Samuel inquired of Jesse of old, "Are here all thy children?" May we all be ready and able to respond quickly, "Yes, Lord." "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." Isa. 8:18.

Your friend and brother,
W. H. BRANSON.

The Latter Rain—No. 9

By MEADE MacGUIRE

LET us now briefly review the points we have been considering, before we conclude these studies.

1. Before leaving this world, Jesus promised that He would return, and He gave many signs by which His people would know when His coming was at hand.

2. He declared that the generation that saw those signs would not pass till all was fulfilled, and that a special message would be given to the world to prepare a people to welcome Him.

3. In connection with the giving of that message He promised a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit similar to that witnessed at Pentecost, only in greater measure, which would lighten the earth with His glory.

4. The signs appeared, and God was ready to

finish the work many years ago, but His people were not ready, and are not yet ready.

5. God foreknew all this; He revealed it in His word and made provision for our present situation by His counsel to the church of the Laodiceans, and the alarm and appeal of the prophet Joel.

6. When God's people heed this counsel, there will be a great revival and reformation; they will renounce and overcome all sin, and be clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

7. Thus the way is prepared for God to pour out the latter rain, which will bring the loud cry and finish the work of the gospel in this world.

Another vital question connected with this study should have our careful consideration. Thousands of God's people are longing for the Saviour to come. They are working and praying to that end, and are trying daily to overcome their sins and be ready when the latter rain comes.

But they do not understand why the latter rain does not come, nor realize that it is our own condition that prevents the showers from falling. They have not been impressed with the emphatic statement, "I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment." And when their attention is called to this statement, they do not understand how such an experience can be obtained. Some are inclined to be discouraged, fearing that such a high standard is unattainable by them. But it is God who has made this requirement, and He has revealed plainly how it may be attained. The important thing is to believe that God means just what He says, and to pray humbly and earnestly for light to understand, and to co-operate with Him. Here is His command:

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

And here is the promise:

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. 5:23, 24.

"None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection, and places before us the example of Christ's character. In



Calvary

BY ALFRED GRANT WALTON

O blessed Christ, impaled upon the cross,
Abased, disowned in death's dark agony,
What foes are these that, blind to gain or loss,
Have wrought Thy fall and nailed Thee to a tree?

I know them all—Indifference! Smugness! Hate!
The guilt is theirs! They pierced Thy tender flesh;
And still they live to scorn and desecrate
Thy selfless gift, and bring Thee wounds, afresh.

Alas! O Christ! I too have passed Thee by,
And left Thee hanging lonely on the road,
Have turned away, have shunned Thy pleading cry
And kept the silence of the multitude.

Forgive! O Christ! Thou hast not died in vain!
Redeeming love shall make me whole again!

—*Watchman-Examiner.*

His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through co-operation with divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God's assurance to us that we too may obtain complete victory."—*"Acts of the Apostles," p. 531.*

In the beginning God created man in His own image, but through sin that image has been well-nigh obliterated. Salvation is the restoration of the divine image. It must, therefore, be more than the forgiveness of sins. The promise is, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." God has predestinated all His children "to be conformed to the image of His Son," and by beholding Him we are to be "changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This is the goal that every true believer must set for himself.

"Jesus said, Be perfect as your Father is perfect. If you are the children of God, you are partakers of His nature, and you cannot but be like Him. Every child lives by the life of his father. If you are God's children,—begotten by His Spirit,—you live by the life of God. In Christ dwells 'all the fullness of the God-head bodily;' and the life of Jesus is made manifest 'in our mortal flesh.' That life in you will produce the same character and manifest the same works as it did in Him. Thus you will be in harmony with every

precept of His law; for the 'law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul.' Through love the 'righteousness of the law' will be 'fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'"—*"Mount of Blessing," p. 118.*

If we have any appreciation of the wonderful provisions our loving heavenly Father has made for our salvation, we shall gladly co-operate with Him in His plan to perfect our characters.

"As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require."—*"Christ's Object Lessons," p. 163.*

"True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all."—*"Acts of the Apostles," p. 565.*

Let us set our eyes resolutely upon that priceless goal of Christlike perfection of character, studying, praying, working together with our divine Master, that through the agency of His Holy Spirit we may soon reach the goal.

On Defending Ourselves

By L. H. CHRISTIAN

WE should seldom try to defend ourselves. It doesn't pay. If we are right, we don't need to, and if we are wrong, it won't help. It may at times be good to remove some particular prejudice or clear up some misstatement honestly made by our friends. However, even that usually is better left undone. Our own deeds are either our best defenders or our worst accusers. The truth is that people know pretty well what we are, and will decide for themselves. Rumors and idle or even wicked gossip cannot be killed, but in time they come to an end unless we keep them alive by trying to disprove them. It was not to His disciples but to the Pharisees that Jesus said, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men." Luke 16:15.

Some people live in an atmosphere of trying to defend themselves. They often make it difficult, for they are hard to please. Being sensitive, they are constantly on the lookout lest they be misunderstood or maligned. Some of them mean well. They seem to think it a dreadful thing to be abused. It isn't. Anyone who amounts to anything really worth while is criticized. Criticism of a man or a church is often a sign that the accused party has rendered some real service, whatever it may be. While criticism is wicked and frequently ruins the critic, we may, by the help of God, in one sense say that our critics are our best friends. They advertise us in the only kind of advertising many folk read. But wise people don't believe an advertisement until they see the goods. God's people are under His protection. No matter how much it may hurt to be accused, it may be good for our own souls.

What we have stated here applies not only to the individual, but also to the church. Some are forever hurling bitter, lying darts at the advent movement. They misrepresent our leaders. They denounce our teachings. They attack the entire remnant people of God. They even delight in giving long lists of quotations from the Spirit of prophecy writings to prove how bad we are. Indeed, some of them have stigmatized the true people of the Lord as Babylon. While their quotations are garbled and misapplied, and their accusations false, like the other great "accuser of the brethren," they delight in their work. We have listened to their deceptive words for years and they have done us little harm. Some years ago a minister began to call himself the "Advent Church Cobbler." For years after he left us, he was continually finding fault with our faith and our work. We said but very little. It seemed foolish, as one of our good brethren then expressed it, "to waste our time chasing the devil's dogs." Jesus Himself has set us the right example. At His last trial His enemies charged Him with one misdeed after another, but "He answered . . . never a word." Matt. 27:14. His accusers were excited and angry, but Jesus was calm and peaceful. So are we to treat these petty spies and smiters of God's people.

Not only the Scriptures but also years of experience have taught us as a church that to false reports no answer is the best answer. Our young men in the service are learning the power of tactful silence. The rest of us, too, need to ponder the Master's words, "In your patience possess ye your souls." In hours of anxiety there is cheering comfort and assurance in knowing that God cares.