



HEART RELIGION

by Daniel Clayton



There is a common perception in established Christendom that God requires, and is moved by great pomp and ceremony. The majority of proclaimed believers also seem to think that being a ‘good’ Christian means living, and making public displays of ‘good works’ and outward shows of dedication and piety.

In many churches, for example, great attention is called to ‘who gives what’ during offering time. A big deal is made of those who are able to produce the largest sums, as opposed to those of less repute who can only give very little, or none at all.

Many denominations place great emphasis on the physically seen things such as length of the dress, covering of the head, wearing of jewellery, hairstyle etc. and they focus on these issues as standards of righteousness and virtue. Those who seem to maintain these outward facades are exalted and looked upon as exemplars and paragons of goodness.

In other words, the church generally believes that what makes

a person a ‘true’ Christian are the things that we can see him do, his public demonstrations of ‘righteousness’ and how well he consistently lives up to the perceived ‘godly’ standards of those who are watching his outward behavior.

True, the Bible does teach that proper public decorum is necessary, and that the life and conduct of the believer should take the condition and ignorance of the unbelieving onlooker into account. Hence Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:23:

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

Throughout his writings, there are numerous counsels of a similar nature. For example, 1 Timothy 2:8-10 says:

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

And also 1 Thessalonians 5:22, which says:

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

So it cannot be argued that there is an important aspect of Christian liv-

ing which requires me to do certain things publicly, or abstain from certain behaviours, because my life is not only to be lived for myself, but is more importantly, to serve as a **witness** to the unbeliever. My actions and decisions must therefore take these onlookers into account, and hence a Christian has to always consider the issue of *expediency*.

But is this outward display, this manifestation of public behaviours all that *true* Christianity entails? Is this the thing that pleases our Almighty Father most, and enhances our walk with Him? Is He impressed by public deeds of charity, by clothes or hair or diet? Is He stirred by the same vain farces that move fickle men? The Lord Himself answers this issue clearly by what He says to Samuel, in 1 Samuel 16:7:

But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man

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The *Berean Spirit* is dedicated to the promotion and restoration of all Bible truths and principles that God has given to His people, especially for the last days of this earth's history.

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looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on **the heart**.

Here we see that what our father wants, what He sees and what impresses Him, is completely different from the standard of men! You see, humans are very good actors and pretenders! We are seasoned in the art of putting on hypocritical shows aimed at winning the approval and applause of our fellow men. More often than not, these displays are not genuinely from the heart, but merely outward tokens put on for the sole purpose of winning human praise. Many people become so good at this 'fake righteousness' that they are able to fool most, if not all of their associates. They become 'white washed sepulchres,' who exist and act only for the love and adulation of others.

But no man can fool God! While men see only outward manifesta-

tions, He sees the truth of the matter, the core of all motivation, the source of all deeds. He sees the *heart*! This is what matters to Him. This is where He focuses and judges and interacts, because He knows that out of the abundance of the *heart* the mouth speaks! He knows that deeds have meaning only inasmuch as they *truly* come from the heart.

And so the greatest of all the commandments is to love the Lord God with all our **heart**, soul, mind and strength. Jeremiah 29:13 tells us:

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with **all your heart**.

In Joel 2:12, we are told:

Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with **all your heart**, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:

What God is really interested in, is not the outward, often farcical actions performed by men to fulfil some social, or humanly established standard, He is interested in **our hearts**!

In summary, the true Christianity which God sees, which pleases Him or keeps Him away as the case may be, is the **secret condition of the heart towards Him**! Any man can do good deeds publicly and win applause, but the issue is, what is His motive? What drives Him to act? Does He seek to please man, or God? Jesus gives us critical insight into how we can *prove* that our motives and actions are sincere towards God.

Let us look carefully at what The Lord tells us in the following passage. Matthew 6:1-6 says:

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and

in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

This description tells us very clearly the difference between 'public' righteousness, and true *heart* religion. Jesus is saying, God is not moved by external deeds which are merely carried out to impress and win the approval of men! He is not stirred by outward righteousness, shrouded in the guise of piety. Men look at these displays and they are impressed! They are moved, and they give their approval based on their own base standards. But not God!

If you want to show that your motive is to please Him *only*, if you want to win *His* approval, if your goal is to impress *Him* alone, then Jesus says, do your good works **in secret**! Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Operate and live in a place where you most often will not win the commendation of men, but you will receive **HIS** praise. This will be the ultimate proof that you are doing it for Him!

It is easy to go out in public where everyone can see you, and feed the poor, pray a long, eloquent prayer, or wear apparel which makes you seem modest and pious. But how do you respond when no one is looking, no one knows, and the Lord says to you, give up that movie?

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THE LAST REVIVAL

by David Clayton



THE GOSPEL TO BE PREACHED

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matt 24:14)

The preaching of the gospel to all the world has always been the goal of the Christian church. This promise of Jesus has always been in the forefront of Christian endeavor, we have never forgotten that Jesus promised that this would be accomplished before he could come again and many have referred to it as the last great sign of the coming of Jesus. Somehow, someday, before Jesus comes

again every single nation, every single city, every single individual is to hear and understand the good news of the kingdom. However the truth is, that the longer time lasts the more daunting the task seems and the more impossible to accomplish.

As I was growing up in the Seventh-day Adventist church, I grew accustomed to hearing mission stories every Sabbath. Every week we would have stories from distant lands read to us, telling of the advancement of the work of the gospel and of the inroads that were being made among the heathen. As a boy, it seemed to me that the gospel

had penetrated into every corner of the world and that it would just be a matter of time until the work was over. But as I grew up and became more aware, the reality of the task came home to me. First of all much of what is being presented in the world today, in the name of Christianity, is not the gospel at all, but a watered-down counterfeit! But in addition to this there are close to eight billion people alive on planet Earth today, and billions of these people have probably never even heard the name, "Jesus Christ!" There are more than a billion people in China alone, an atheistic, commu-

nistic country where the preaching of Jesus Christ is heavily repressed. The vast majority of these people have never heard the gospel. There are similar numbers likewise in India where hundreds of millions of people embrace the Hindu religion and also know nothing about Christianity. When we include the Islamic countries of the Middle East and Africa where the preaching of Christian doctrine is absolutely forbidden, it is clear that the preaching of the gospel to all the world is still, very far from being accomplished.

However, there are several passages in the Bible which speak of this last great work of the carrying of the good news to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. When we examine these passages something becomes clear: the preaching of the gospel in all the world is an event which is to gain great momentum and to come to a climax during the final moments of this world's history. In other words, the pace at which the work has been progressing is not an indication of how it will be completed. Somehow, by some means, right down at the end of time, something is to happen; Extraordinary momentum will be given to the preaching of the gospel so that in one brief moment of time, the task will be finished.

PROMISE OF REVIVAL

The prophet Joel is one of the first Bible writers who gives us a fairly detailed description of what will happen to cause this great burst of power among God's people, something which will enable them to finish the task rapidly, in a very short space of time.

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in

those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. (Joel 2:28-31)

Of course, Peter says that this prophecy was fulfilled many years ago on the day of Pentecost. As he and the other apostles were preaching, having been just baptized with the power of the Holy Spirit. When some accused them of being drunk, Peter responded,

For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: (Acts 2:15-17)

It is clear that this experience at Pentecost was a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, but when we examine the prophecy more closely we can see that this was only a partial fulfillment. The last part of the prophecy reveals the fact that there are events associated with the fulfillment of this prophecy which never took place at Pentecost. The prophecy specifies,

And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. (Joel 2:30-31)

Now we can see that this prophecy is to receive its complete fulfillment down at the end of time just before the great and terrible day of the Lord, at that time there are to be tremendous cosmic events indicating that we have come to the very end of time. These never took place during

the experience of the apostles, but they are to be signs by which we can mark the approach of the end, as the prophecy of Joel is finally fulfilled in the truest sense.

The prophet Isaiah also spoke of this last great revival in several passages. In chapter 60, we read:

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. (Isa 60:1-4)

Notice that Isaiah speaks of a time when the world is in great spiritual darkness. He says, "the darkness shall cover the earth." It is at this particular time in this moment of greatest gloom that something extraordinary happens among the people of God. The glory of God comes upon his people in a measure that the world has never seen before. For the first time the entire planet is able to see the glory of God, the true meaning of the gospel will be understood not only by the words that are spoken, but in the lives of God's people and in the mighty power which accompanies their teaching. The results are dramatic; the prophet says, "the Gentiles shall come to thy light," and even, "Kings to the brightness of thy rising." We also find the apostle John describing this final greatest of all revivals in Revelation chapter 18:

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. (Rev 18:1)

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SIN CONSCIOUSNESS (PART 2)

by Imad Awde



I heard it once said, “The greatest want of men, is the want of acceptance, and the greatest fear is that of rejection.”

Sin consciousness, or this sense of unacceptance, guilt, unforgiveness and unworthiness, is the mother of all religions. The sense of being unaccepted and rejected by deity has led people to invent all kinds of religions and practices that seem to give them a sense of acceptance with God.

Why do you think the Hindu and Buddhist gives offerings to their idols; and why do so many Christians **unwillingly** do good Christian deeds, go to church and pray? (Notice I said unwillingly. I am not referring to the new creature who willingly and lovingly does good deeds). It is their want of acceptance, and their fear of rejection.

This sense of sin breeds fear in the heart of man towards God. It was

born at the fall. We saw it manifested in Adam running away from God. Years back, and still today, this sin consciousness drove people to religion trying to please God. Today, however, because of the arrogance of humanity, sin consciousness has led them to rebel against God, to reject the notion of God.

It destroys faith, robs us of our peace of mind, stops us from entering into God’s rest, and weakens the most earnest and zealous of prayer lives. It is one of the most effective tools of the devil in hindering God’s people from walking in the spirit. It robs us from close fellowship and communion with God and fills us with a sense of fear and unworthiness.

Sin consciousness equally impacts the unregenerate, unborn again, unconverted man, and the underdeveloped believer. The Christian who has not realized his reality in Christ. The one who has not accepted what the word of God says about

him. Both can be equally plagued by such consciousness.

So back to our question from the previous article: “Has God provided a redemption that takes away this sin consciousness and permits man to re-enter into the His presence and stand there with boldness, without a sense of rejection and condemnation?”

I say most defiantly He has. Notice what we read in Hebrews. After saying: “gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience,” Heb 9:9, the author goes on to write:

Heb 9:14 *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

The blood, or life of Christ is able to, and has already cleansed the conscience of all those who trust in Him.

Our sense of guilt is removed, peace is communicated, and we are enabled to approach God not only without fear, but with boldness and rejoicing.

In Chapter 10 after he restates the same problem and says that the continual sacrificial ritual served as a reminder of sin, and hence the conscious of the worshipper was not purified, he goes on to say:

Heb 10:14 - 17 *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

Jesus, by His one sacrifice, by offering His life, “perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

What does that mean? Contextually it is contrasted with what the sacrifices under the OC (*Old Covenant*) could not achieve. They could not give the worshipper a continuous and every enduring sense of forgiveness and acceptance with God. Hence there was a need for the sacrifices and offerings to be repeated year after year. But what Christ did, gives the worshipper an ever-enduring sense of forgiveness and acceptance with God. So much so that we are encouraged to come boldly before the throne.

Heb 10:19, 20 *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

That is why there is no more need for offering for sin. That is why the earthly sanctuary service was no longer needed. Because Christ fulfilled its purpose, accomplished what it typified. And the author points to the promise “*their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*”

No more remembrance of sin, no more consciousness of sin, no more sense of guilt, rejection, fear and worry to the born-again Christian. God has said, “*I will remember your sins no more.*” God has implemented a redemption that covers every phase of my need, forgives every aspect of my sin, and perfectly restores my fellowship with Him. I, you, and every believer in Jesus stands perfectly complete in Christ. “*Ye are complete in Him*” the Bible says.

If you are a believer in Christ, you have partaken of the fullness of His Grace and truth (John 1:16); We, born again creatures, have been made righteous in Christ; We are accepted with the Father; We are invited to boldly enter the presence of God; God has taken away the sin consciousness from us, and has given us the consciousness of acceptance, and love, and redemption. God has clothed our nakedness with His robe of righteousness. Because of all this and more, we can grow from grace to grace. Fear has gone; shame has been taken out of the way; guilt has been dealt with; and all our sins have been forgiven. We receive more of His grace as we understand more of what we have in Him.

Do not let the sense of rejection, unacceptance, fear and unforgiveness hinder you from walking in the spirit, hinder you from claiming your reality, hinder you from coming boldly before the throne of Grace. It is a trick from the devil to stop you growing; to stop you from realising your reality and potential.

Heb 10:22 *Let us draw near with a true heart (not a doubting or hypocritical one, but a sincere and genuine heart) in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

In full assurance of faith: which means, without doubting or wavering; with unshaken confidence—not in myself, nor in my faith, but in the

merits of Christ, as giving me the unquestionable title to draw near unto God. It points to the heart that is resting, trusting and relying upon the absolute sufficiency of the blood of Christ which was shed for my sins, and His ability to maintain my standing before God. To keep me accepted, to keep me holy, to keep me united with God.

Having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. An “evil conscience” is one that accuses of guilt and oppresses because of unpardoned sin. We are freed from a sense of condemnation. We are free from sin consciousness. Take courage; stop doubting Christ’s accomplished work. Stop doubting your worth, your value, and your position as a child of God. You are forgiven; you are an adopted child of God. You are reconciled to God. And you are loved by Him.

Our bodies washed with pure water. We have been cleansed, just like the priests were cleansed before entering the presence of God (Ex29:4). Meaning we have been made worthy to come boldly before His presence.

Heb 10:23 *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith (cling to the realities of who we are & the confident expectation of a future filled with hope) without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)(he is dependable, we can count on Him)*

Sin consciousness has hindered many believers for too long from coming boldly with confidence before God. It has taken confidence away and stopped many from walking in the spirit. The bible says

Col 1:12 - 14 *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

Made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance: means He qualified us, made us sufficient, made us worthy to be co-heirs with Christ and with all the saints.

Stop thinking you are not good enough, you are not worthy enough, you are not forgiven enough, you are not loved enough. God has made you worthy. It is His work, His call, His mercy and grace. He said you are worthy; you are accepted in the beloved; you are my sons and daughters.

Delivered us from the power of darkness: God has set you free, has rescued you from the authority of Satan. You are no longer under Satan's dominion, you are no longer a member of the kingdom of darkness. Satan has no longer legal right to reign over anyone who accepted Jesus as their Saviour.

Translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: You are a member, a citizen in God's kingdom, under God's authority and power. You have been placed in a position where you can operate and function in the realm of God's ability not man's ability.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: In Christ you have been redeemed, you have been forgiven of your sins. God is not holding a grudge against you, He never held you guilty for your sins (2 Cor 5:19). He forgave you before you were even born. Guilt and forgiveness have never been an issue. You are forgiven and loved in Christ.

Do not let this consciousness of sin cripple your walk in the spirit, your fellowship and relationship with God. God has:

- Made us worthy
- Delivered us out Satan's authority
- Recreated us and translated us into the kingdom of His son
- Forgiven us all our sins

Believe it brother; believe it sister.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

I recently caught a flight to visit a group of believers. Because of covid 19, the law was no mask no flight. I put a mask on, caught the flight and was able to minister to God's people.

However, one brother told me, "you didn't have to wear a mask. I know someone who caught a flight and they were not able to make him wear a mask. You should know your rights." He might be right I don't know and it doesn't really bother me. But the one true thing this brother said is, "Know your rights."

I would like to tell all readers, "Know your spiritual rights". Spiritual ignorance has led many to lose spiritual battles; to lose spiritual ground which has already been gained by Christ.

In the year 2000, Tomas Martinez, a Chilean homeless man living on the streets of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, fled police who were bringing him news of a \$6-million inheritance.

Forty years earlier Tomas, and his wife had separated after only a few months of marriage. To escape prosecution for writing some bad cheques, Tomas fled to Bolivia, where he became an alcoholic and drug addict, known for begging on the streets. Meanwhile, his wife continued to live in Chile.

2 years before the wife died, she inherited a huge fortune.

The two of them never divorced and she never remarried. Since they had no children, Tomas was her rightful heir. When detectives were hired to locate Tomas, they tracked him to a bar that he often visited. Tomas realized the men were looking for him and thought they were there to arrest him for the bad cheques he had written years before. Tomas disappeared without a trace, causing Bolivian newspapers to speak of him in 2000 as a "new millionaire para-

doxically not knowing his fortune". Tomas has never been found.

The sad reality is that due to this sin consciousness many Christians are like Tomas Martinez. Many are unaware of their inheritance, and rights; unaware that they have been fully forgiven and reconciled to God. Because of their spiritual ignorance, they live unfulfilled Christian lives. The beloved apostles wrote:

1Jn 3:2 *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

Know your rights:

- You, have the right to enter into the throne room of God, and stand in His presence with BOLDNESS, without fear (Heb 4:16; 10:19).
- You have the right to KNOW that you are accepted in the beloved (Eph 1:6),
- You have the right to know that you are heard and loved by the Father (John 16:26,27).

Live your life like an accepted child of God. Speak with confidence that comes from heaven. Know you are adopted, accepted and redeemed. And let this acceptance, confidence, adoption and redemption be manifested in your life.

Away with this sin consciousness that has crippled God's people for many years. Open your heart for your God given right. Know and receive what is yours. And may the spirit of God use this knowledge to breed godly boldness and confidence that will lead you to live a life worthy of your calling.

Love because you are loved. Forgive, because you have been forgiven. And let the righteousness of Christ be manifested in your everyday life.



HEART RELIGION

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What about when He secretly tells you, stop eating that piece of food that you love, or stop wearing that piece of clothing? When you are alone and His voice says 'this is the way, walk ye in it,' what is your heart like towards Him then? Do you obey Him in this secret place, or is your obedience reserved only for public displays?

This secret relationship is what God desires! A relationship where His children value **only** His approval! Hence we have no need to show off publicly, and we operate 'in the secret place' where only He sees! The brethren may not know, the neighbour may not see, even my family and spouse may be completely unaware. But my Father and I know, and that is all that matters. I obey Him even when no one else can see, or tell me I have done well, because my sole desire is to please **Him!**

This is exactly why Jesus says in John 14:23:

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

In other words, if Jesus is the one I love, if His approval is what I desire most of all, if my primary goal is to impress Him and not men, then I will obey *Him!* My actions and behaviour will all be geared towards gaining His applause, even if that means everyone else in my world frowns and disapproves!

When I have this attitude towards my Father in the *secret* recesses of my heart, Jesus promises 'The Father which sees in secret will reward you *openly!* He follows that up by saying '*my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make*

our abode with him.' What an awesome prospect and immeasurable privilege, to win the approval of The Almighty God! What a high calling to live, not because I want to please men and hear their applause, but because I have the opportunity to make the one I call Father smile, to show Him how much I value His words and crave His praise!

So brethren, consider well what the *true* worship of God means. Some serve Him well from the heights of the pulpit, and walk uprightly between the church aisles and pews. They are righteous when all eyes are turned upon them, and the spotlight and adoration of the masses are upon them. But the **only true** righteous living that our Father acknowledges and approves of and desires, the only heart that resonates with His, is the one that is true to Him in secret! I encourage us all to live in the reality of Psalm 91:1

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty!



THE LAST REVIVAL

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It is clear that this is a time of unprecedented success for the proclamation of the good news. There is to be a response such as was never seen before in the history of the world, this is the last revival that the world with sincerity of heart and accept Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives. Of course the great majority will reject this final offer of life, as in all ages Jesus Christ will not find popularity in a world that serves Satan, but still, many honest people will hear and will choose the way of life.

AWAKENING EVENT

In Matthew chapter 25 Jesus told the parable of the ten virgins. In this parable there were ten virgins waiting for the coming of the bridegroom, five of them were wise and prepared themselves by taking extra oil in their lamps but the other five were foolish and did not take this precaution. There was a delay in the expected coming of the bridegroom and during this period all the virgins fell asleep.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. (Matt 25:6-7)

According to the parable, the five wise virgins were saved, while the foolish, without oil, were cast into outer darkness. But the point of interest is that there is a certain point where something happens to awaken these virgins who all fell asleep. The parable says that at midnight a cry was made and this awakened the virgins. This point is of much interest to many Christians because most of us recognize that we are in that period of time in which it seems that all the virgins are asleep. It seems we are all waiting for something to give

us that impetus to devote ourselves to the preaching of the gospel with all our might. Many find hope in this declaration that there is a cry made at midnight. It is interesting to note that this cry is made at midnight, the darkest period of the night. This corresponds to what Isaiah says when he declares that, “darkness shall cover the earth.” It is clear that the moment of the great awakening of God’s people will correspond with the moment of the greatest darkness that the world has ever seen.

The question is, what is this midnight cry? This is not a message that comes from any group of Christians because according to the parable it is all the virgins who fall asleep. This message does not come from them, but it awakens them. As we give this a little thought it becomes clear that this message is not so much a verbal message, but rather it is an event, or a series of events which cause sleeping Christians to become acutely aware that Jesus is about to return. We have seen many signs of the times and we have heard many proclamations that the coming of Jesus is near, but something is to happen so unprecedented, so much out of the ordinary, so clearly a fulfillment of prophecy that every Christian who has an understanding of the word of God, will recognize with absolute certainty that the end has arrived. At the moment, nobody can be absolutely certain what this event will be, but when all things are considered it seems that this event will be the establishment of the mark of the beast.

THE TIME OF POWER

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, (Rev 14:6)

Revelation chapter 14 points to this time when the gospel will be preached to every nation and to ev-

ery people. This is not something that is to take place during many ages nor even many decades. This is something that is to happen during a short space of time. There is something that acts as a catalyst to galvanize God’s people to the great task of finally fulfilling the gospel commission. The context of Revelation 14 makes it clear what this catalyst is. In the previous chapter, Revelation 13, we read:

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (Rev 13:16-17)

We see that immediately before the preaching of the everlasting gospel to the entire world, the mark of the beast is established. Every human being is required to receive that mark or else be unable to participate in the necessary affairs of life. This is the catalyst that brings God’s people to the unshakable awareness that we have come to the end of time and Jesus is about to return. At this point the only people who will be able to work are those who receive the mark, they will be the only ones permitted to function normally in society.

This is the moment of great awakening for the people of God, this is the loud cry that awakens the sleeping virgins. Having lost their jobs, their stability in this world, their hopes for the future in this world, nothing is left for them here, unless they receive the mark! The establishment of this mark of the beast is a decisive event that will split God’s people into the categories of the wise and the foolish. Those who do not truly know God, even though they are called “Christians,” will compromise and will choose what they know, which is the world and its ways, they will receive the mark rather than sacrifice their security and their stability in this life. Those

who know God, even though they might have been asleep, will abandon all connections with this world and the life of this world, and will devote themselves as never before to the task of proclaiming Christ in every corner of this planet, regardless of what it might cost, even to the point of sacrificing their lives. This wholehearted commitment will bind them in an unbreakable union with Jesus and consequently, he will be able to fill them with his mighty power as never before. This is why nothing can stop the preaching of the gospel at this point, and this is why it will be able to reach every single person in every corner of the planet.

Yes, there is to be another great revival, the greatest and the last. The question is, how can we be certain that we will have a part in that greatest of all movements among the people of God? It is clear that we are now in that period of time when the mark of the beast is about to be established. The powers of earth have put all the infrastructure in place so that it is a simple matter to deny anyone the right to buy or sell to each citizen, unless he or she submits to the demands of the state. The system is in place and it needs only for the mark to be added to it. The parable of the ten virgins shows us clearly what our great need is: we must ensure that there is oil in our vessels. We cannot create a great revival, we cannot baptize ourselves with power, but we can abide in Christ, we can, we must bind ourselves to him in an unbreakable, personal relationship. He is the holy spirit who is represented by the oil in the lamps. This is our guarantee that we will have a part in the last great revival which is about to break out among God’s true people.



THE BENEFITS OF SUNLIGHT



SUNLIGHT AND SEROTONIN

We're used to hearing about how too much of the sun's warm rays can be harmful to your skin. But did you know the right balance can have lots of mood-lifting benefits?

Sunlight and darkness trigger the release of hormones in your brain. Exposure to sunlight is thought to increase the brain's release of a hormone called serotonin. Serotonin is associated with boosting mood and helping a person feel calm and focused. At night, darker lighting triggers the brain to make another hormone called melatonin. This hormone is responsible for helping you sleep.

Without enough sun exposure, your serotonin levels can dip. Low levels of serotonin are associated with a higher risk of major depression with seasonal pattern (formerly known as seasonal affective disorder or SAD). This is a form of depression triggered by the changing seasons.

A mood boost isn't the only reason to get increased amounts of sunlight. There are several health benefits associated with catching moderate amounts of rays.

SUNLIGHT AND MENTAL HEALTH

Decreased sun exposure has been associated with a drop in your serotonin levels, which can lead to major depression with seasonal pattern. The light-induced effects of serotonin are triggered by sunlight that goes in through the eye. Sunlight cues special areas in the retina, which triggers the release of serotonin. So, you're more likely to experience this type of depression in the winter time, when the days are shorter.

Due to this connection, one of the main treatments for depression with seasonal pattern is light therapy, also known as phototherapy. You can get a light therapy box to have at home.

The light from the box mimics natural sunlight that stimulates the brain to make serotonin and reduces excess melatonin.

Exposure to sunlight can also benefit those with:

- other types of major depression
- premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD)
- pregnant people with depression

Anxiety-related disorders and panic attacks have also been linked with changing seasons and reduced sunlight.

ADDITIONAL SUNLIGHT BENEFITS

The sun's benefits go beyond fighting stress. The following are some of the other reasons to catch some rays:

BUILDING STRONG BONES

Exposure to the ultraviolet-B radiation in the sun's rays causes a person's

skin to create vitamin D. According to one study from 2008 Trusted Source, in a 30-minute period while wearing a swimsuit, people will make the following vitamin D levels:

- 50,000 international units (IUs) in most Caucasian people
- 20,000 to 30,000 IUs in tanned people
- 8,000 to 10,000 IUs in dark skinned people

The vitamin D made thanks to the sun plays a big role in bone health. Low vitamin D levels have been linked to rickets in children and bone-wasting diseases like osteoporosis and osteomalacia.

CANCER PREVENTION

Although excess sunlight can contribute to skin cancers, a moderate amount of sunlight actually has preventive benefits when it comes to cancer.

According to researchers, those who live in areas with fewer daylight hours are more likely to have some specific cancers than those who live where there's more sun during the day. These cancers include:

colon cancer

- Hodgkin's lymphoma
- ovarian cancer
- pancreatic cancer
- prostate cancer

HEALING SKIN CONDITIONS

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) Trusted Source, sun exposure might help treat several skin conditions, too. Doctors have recommended UV radiation exposure to treat:

- psoriasis
- eczema
- jaundice
- acne

While light therapy isn't for everyone, a dermatologist can recom-

mend whether light treatments will benefit your specific skin concerns.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS

Research studies have revealed preliminary links between sunlight as a potential treatment for several other conditions. These include:

- rheumatoid arthritis (RA)
- systemic lupus erythematosus
- inflammatory bowel disease
- thyroiditis

However, more studies need to be conducted before researchers can conclude that sunlight can be a treatment for these and other conditions.

SUNLIGHT AND MODERATION

While there are a lot of good reasons to get sun, the sun emits ultraviolet (UV) radiation. UV radiation can penetrate the skin and damage cell DNA. This can lead to skin cancer.

Researchers don't always have an exact measurement for how long you should stay outside to reap the benefits of sunlight. But defining an excess amount of sun exposure depends on your skin type and how direct the sun's rays are.

People with fair skin typically get a sunburn more quickly than those with darker skin. Also, you're more likely to get a sunburn going outside when the sun's rays are more direct. This usually takes place between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

According to WHO Trusted Source, getting anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes of sunlight on your arms, hands, and face 2-3 times a week is enough to enjoy the vitamin D-boosting benefits of the sun. Note that the sun must penetrate the skin. Wearing sunscreen or clothing over your skin won't result in vitamin D production.

But if you're going to be outside for more than 15 minutes, it's a good idea to protect your skin. You can do that by applying sunscreen with

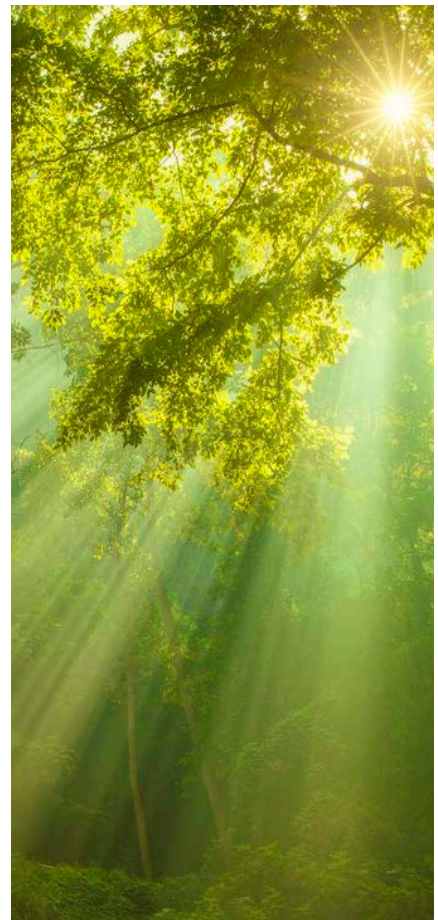
a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. Wearing a protective hat and shirt can also help.

OUTLOOK

From treating skin conditions to improving mood, sunlight has many benefits. If you live in higher latitudes with little sunlight, a light box may provide some of its mood-boosting benefits.

Because excess sun exposure is linked with increased skin cancer risk, don't stay outside too long without sunscreen. If you're going to be outside for longer than 15 minutes or so, you'll need a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.

Source Material: <https://www.healthline.com/health/depression/benefits-sunlight>



TASTY VEGAN RECIPES

PUMPKIN-OATMEAL BARS



- 1 flax egg (1 TBSP ground flaxseed + 3 TBSP water, whisk together, set for 15 mins)
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract

DRY INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ¼ c rolled oats
- ½ c + 2 TBSP oat flour
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp salt

ADD-INS:

- ¼ c vegan chocolate chips or your favorite add-in
- ¼ c pecans, chopped or more of your favorite add-in

WET INGREDIENTS:

- ½ c 100% pure pumpkin puree
- 2 TBSP melted coconut oil
- 3 TBSP pure maple syrup
- 3 TBSP coconut sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper or greased foil. Set aside.
2. Add the wet ingredients to a large bowl; whisk until well incorporated.
3. Add the dry ingredients; whisk together until just incorporated, making sure no flour patches remain. Fold in chocolate chips and nuts.
4. Pour batter into the prepared baking pan and smooth the top into an even layer.
5. Bake for 20-30 minutes, until the edges have browned. Allow to cool on a cooling rack for about 1 hour. Lift out, slice and...

enjoy!

Source Material: <https://beamingbaker.com/gluten-free-pumpkin-chocolate-chip-oatmeal-breakfast-bars-vegan-gf-dairy-free-refined-sugar-free-video/>