

REMNANT PROPHECY SEMINAR

Self-Sacrificing Love

03: Leaving First Love/Peter's Experience

Darrio Taylor: 2014/ Transcribed and edited for readability by 7emca7

Revelation 2:1 "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love. 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

The church of the Ephesians is the early apostolic church, the church of Pentecost and the Early Rain. There was nothing wrong with this church's doctrines, their theology was correct. In fact the Bible tells us they could not bear those that were evil and they tried those that said they were apostles and were not and found them liars. One way God tries His people is through the Word of God, so when they were trying those that said they were apostles, this meant they were testing all of their teaching and doctrine by the Word.

Isaiah 8:20 "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

They knew Bible principles; they knew how to interpret the scriptures; they knew how to rightly divide the Word of Truth, however, the Bible says they had left their first Love. We are identifying this 'first Love' as Self-sacrificing Love, Love for Jesus, Love for souls that Jesus died for, Love for one another and Love for the truth. The Bible is clear they left this, they dropped it off, and they picked up something else.

Jesus said, "You have this though, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." Love is beginning to wain; in fact Love has been left behind; it is an afterthought, it is in the background. They were still holding on to doctrine and the truth; still holding on to the pillars, reforms, and missionary service, but Love is left behind, Love is not present; but they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes.

Now we are going to look forward in history; we see Ephesus, then Smyrna, then Pergamos and notice the change that takes place. Remember, Love is gone, but they are still holding on to

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knowledge, prophecy, and doctrine. They don't tolerate New Theology, Spiritualism, and false teachers and false apostles at all.

Revelation 2:14 "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."

Notice the shift here; this is still the same Christian church, just a different period in the Christian era; but something is different, something strikingly, terribly, and alarmingly frightening, from Ephesus to Pergamos. In Ephesus Jesus says, "You have this; you have left your first Love, but you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. When you get to Pergamos, what has changed? Now they are holding to that very doctrine.

Sometimes we believe that as long as we emphasize doctrine, as long as we understand the truth for this time and we can clearly identify truth, teach it and explain it to others, we think that this is enough for our Christian experience. But the theory of the truth is not enough. If you are holding onto truth now, but you let go of your first Love, sooner or later that which you hated, that which you knew was false, that which you would not tolerate under any circumstances, one day you will find yourself holding onto that which is error, that which is darkness.

What I want you to see is when Love is dropped out of sight that is the beginning of apostasy in the Christian's experience. You may still have doctrine, but you leave Love behind and that which you once hated, that which you knew was erroneous and darkness, you will now espouse; you will hold it, you will teach it and you will promote it. This lets us know that you definitely have fallen away, but before doctrinal apostasy takes place, Love has to get taken out of the way in order to make that transition. In fact, not only were they holding to the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, but they were holding the doctrine of Balaam that taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel.

Then what occurs in the fourth church, in Thyatira, with the apostasies we see taking place, the compromise between Church and State, Christianity and Paganism.

Revelation 2:20 "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

What doctrine? The doctrine of Jezebel; notice; Love has dropped off, you have left your first Love and now you hold to the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes, and you have the doctrine of Jezebel. There is now a three-fold union there; the union of the Beast, Jezebel; the Dragon, Nicolaitanes; and the False Prophet, Balaam. Catholicism, Spiritualism, Apostate Protestantism; who would have known that when we leave Love behind, this is what prepared the way for the development of the man-of-sin in the early Christian church.

This is bring repeated in our experience; because what you fail to realize is when Love is not there, then there is no longer any barrier or protection from developing the image of the Beast. If you develop the image of the Beast in your character and spirit, then it is not a hard thing for

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you to adopt the doctrines, the teachings of Jezebel, the Nicolaitanes, as well as Balaam. Then when you get to Sardis the next church, the church after the Dark Ages, what does Jesus say?

Revelation 3:1 "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

So we have gone from losing our first Love, hating the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, now we hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, this is what prepares the way for Jezebel to come into the church, and now because of the spiritual influence of Jezebel and her doctrine, now all we have is a name to live, but we are really spiritually dead.

When you get to Philadelphia you have the church of Brotherly Love; for the first time since Ephesus that which was lost is now beginning to be found again and restored. This is the Great Second Advent movement, the Millerites; the parable of the Ten Virgins. That particular history was when the Love that was lost was found once again; but before that time you have the influence of the threefold union coming into the church, simply because Love was lost. It was not lost in the beginning, but it ended up being given up. Love prepares the way, either to keep us faithful and true, or with no Love, we will soon fall away into apostasy and darkness.

What is that First Love?

In the article we looked at in the last study, Sister White says repeatedly, "The True Witness declares". Jesus appears to all Seven Churches differently, but which church does Jesus come to as the True and faithful Witness? Is it Ephesus? No; He comes to Laodicea as the True and faithful Witness. So it is interesting that Sister White is talking about Ephesus and their experience of losing their first Love, but she says the True Witness addresses them, so what does that mean? This is letting us know that even though we are the Laodicean church, the message of Ephesus is still applicable to you and me because Laodicea also has a first Love that has been lost. They also have that syndrome as well where there is a lack of self-sacrificing Love as demonstrated on Calvary.

Love is key Brethren; if you lose Love, you might hang onto true doctrine for a while, but sooner or later you are going to apostatize, fall away from truth, from reform, and from Jesus, but the fall from Jesus comes first. That is what prepares the way for the threefold union and their doctrines to come to the church and then we are having a name to live but we are dead—we are nominal.

1 John 4:16 "And we have **known and believed** the Love that God hath to us. God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

What does it mean to know and believe? Isn't it the same thing? Or is this separate, two different things? Knowing is something that happens intellectually, I know that God loves me; I confess I have known God's Love. But we have known and believed—believing is something that transpires in the heart that affects your whole life—so we have known and believed the Love that God has to us.

Love is an abiding principle. Love is not simply a feeling or an emotion—it is a principle. But the Bible lets us know that even though Love is a principle, Love is also a Person, because it says, "God is Love." Is not God a Person? Sure; so Love is not just a truth or a principle, or a heavenly attribute, Love is a Person. Why is Love a Person as well as a principle or truth? It is because

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through the principles and standards of true Love, God is hoping that we might reflect the Person Who is Love. There is no way you can be having the true principles of Love from the Bible and yet not reflect the image of the One Who is Love. We have to act like the Person and be like the Person Who is Love.

1 John 4:17 "Herein is our Love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."

We are living in the Day of Judgment, the antitypical Day of Atonement, and we do need holy boldness in the Day of Judgment. How do we know when our Love is complete? When there is nothing you can add to it and nothing you can take away. What does it mean when it says, "As He is?" what is He like? He is Love; He is perfect; He is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sin. The measure of our Love can only be complete when we are the same way as He is in heaven, on the earth. That's when you have perfect Love.

1 John 4:18 "There is no fear in Love; but perfect Love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in Love. 19 We Love him, because he first loved us."

We are talking about our first Love and getting it back.

Loving Our Brethren

1 John 4:20 If a man say, I Love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he Love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God Love his brother also."

What is the test or the measure of our Love? Brotherly Love; this is where we come to the church of Philadelphia; the experience of the Adventist people, the Midnight Cry; they had brotherly Love. In fact we are told that the Advent doctrine, when they received the First Angel's Message, it created the same Love and unity that was seen in the early apostolic church. In fact they were of one heart and of one soul that were in the movement.

I want you to notice, Bible Prophecy, the Three Angel's Messages, the truth for this time, that is in part a measure of our Love for the truth; but the way that God examines and tests us to see whether or not we have His Love abiding in us, whether or not that Love is complete and perfect, is how do you treat a brother? How do you treat your sister in Christ? How do you treat your wife? How do you treat your children? How do you behave in your home? That is the measure of Love. This is the test and standard of all doctrine; but the test of Love is demonstrated not so much in what you believe, but in how you treat others; how you behave; how you act. So what type of Love are we talking about?

1 John 4:20 "If a man say, I Love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he Love God whom he hath not seen?"

We talk about how we Love God; "I Love God, I Love truth, I Love the message", but God has tested that Love by how you treat your brother. This is the commandment He has given, if you Love God you Love your brother also. Don't forget your brother; don't forget your sister.

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What kind of Love are we talking about? Are we talking about love-sick sentimentalism? Are we talking about an emotion or some type of feeling? We should have good feelings toward one another but this Love we are talking about is something deeper than that!

1 John 3:11 "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should Love one another. 12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

Cain had a problem loving his brother; he couldn't Love his brother, because his brother's works which were righteous, rebuked his evil and unrighteous works.

From Death to Life

1 John 3:13 "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we Love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

What does that mean? If you don't Love your brother, you abide in death; how can you abide in death when you are still alive? The dead don't live; the dead don't know anything; the Bible is clear that your Love and your hatred, all your feelings and emotions are no more when you go down to the grave. But here the Bible is saying if you don't Love, you are abiding in death. What does this mean?

You are not abiding in Christ; abiding in death, this is dealing with the one who had the character of death. Satan is the one who has the character of death. Remember the four horses, the white, the red, the black and the pale horse in the fourth seal of Revelation 6? The rider on the pale horse, his name was death and hell followed him.

You can tell when someone does not Love their brethren; they are abiding in death and not in Christ. What do they give to their brother or sister? They give them a whole lot of hell many times; because they are spiritually dead; they are abiding in death. This is the character of Satan and the papacy as well. They have a name to live, but they are dead. How does the papacy treat their brethren that do not agree with them? "Off with your head!" Are we not in danger of manifesting that same spirit of antichrist?

1 John 3:15 "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16 Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

That is self-sacrificing Love for your brethren; self denying Love.

1 John 3:17 "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not Love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

It is interesting that John here is dwelling on Love in every chapter; why does he keep dwelling on Love? Why does Paul keep dwelling on Love and Christian charity? Why does Peter keep dwelling on this? Peter, Paul and John had one thing in common; they all were living in the time period of the church of Ephesus. They saw that the problem in the early Christian church was a lack of self-sacrificing Love. It was left behind and dropped out of sight; that is why they keep

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dwelling on it, because this was the problem, this was what they were experiencing at the time. Love is expressed in self-sacrificing; you can't have self-sacrificing Love without the Holy Spirit. You can't have self-sacrificing Love unless you behold Jesus on Calvary and by beholding you are changed into that same image.

It is not until we realize what sin has done and how it has cost the life of the Son of God and how it wounds Him afresh and puts Him to open shame, pain, agony and suffering and that He is doing that for us. Our sins killed the Son of God and broke His heart. When we see this, that is when we begin to have faith, Love and appreciation for what He has done. We always behold Him dying on Calvary for us, we lament our past transgressions and sin; that is what causes us to want to put away sin. Even in heaven, Calvary will always be kept before us, because He will remain the Lamb that was slain, throughout eternity.

John 15:10 "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my Love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his Love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye Love one another, as I have loved you."

Jesus Loved us with self-sacrificing Love.

13 "Greater Love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Peter's Experience

I like to look at the man, servant and apostle, Simon Peter. We will look at the life of Peter and his experience, as a testimony of what the first Love is. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works;" what are the first works? It is regaining the first Love, self-sacrificing Love.

John 21:14 "This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead."

Notice that Christ came three times to His disciples after He had risen from the dead. When I see threes in the Bible I either see the threefold union of Babylon, or the threefold message of Revelation 14, or the heavenly Trio, the Godhead.

John 21:15 "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I Love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I Love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I Love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me."

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According to verse 19 how was Peter to glorify God? What does it mean to glorify God? Is there a message that commands us to give God glory? The First Angel's message says, "Fear God and give Him glory." Peter was to give glory to God by the type of death he would die. We know the death Peter died was crucifixion, but he chose to die up-side down, because he did not feel he was worthy to die in the same way as his Master. God is glorified in our death; in other words, death to self, crucifixion of sin; we die daily, self-sacrificing Love, this is how we glorify God because this is the glory of the law.

This is the law of the new kingdom in heaven; it will be seen that this is the law of self-renunciation. That's the glory of the law and of the new kingdom. Self-sacrificing Love and death to self, this is what brings glory to God. So as long as we remain alive in sin, in selfishness, pride and love of the world, we can't bring God glory; we are bringing glory to man and glory to Satan.

Why did Jesus ask Peter three times, "Do you Love me?" It wasn't because Jesus was hard of hearing and He didn't understand the first time He asked him. He was purposely asking him three times because he had rejected Jesus three times. There was a three-fold test that Peter rejected, and right here Jesus wanted to show His other disciples that Peter was truly humbled, truly repentant, truly converted, so He gave him another three-fold test, which represents the Three Angel's messages, in order for him to be qualified to "Feed My sheep and feed My lambs."

Jesus was a faithful Pastor; He faithfully instructed His disciples in the more sure word of prophecy. He always let them know what was going to happen, "The Son of man is going to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. He is going to be given to the Gentiles, they are going to mock Him, spit on Him, and crucify Him and on the third day He is going to rise." He was always telling them the end from the beginning; before it comes to pass, so they might believe. Here in Matthew 36, this is the Last Supper, where Communion; the Ordinances of foot washing are instituted. They had sung an hymn; they had worship together and then Jesus said:

Matthew 26:31 "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."

Jesus is giving a prophecy here, quoting from Zechariah 13:7, "You are all going to be scattered. I am going to be smitten and you are going to be scattered."

32 "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

Jesus is explaining prophecy, He is giving a lesson, a parable and who was the first one to answer? Who was the first one to show their knowledge and that they understood and to show off their zeal? Peter was always quick to give an answer.

33 "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended."

What is Peter doing here? He is comparing other men with himself and we are told that those that compare themselves among themselves are not wise. "Everybody is going to be offended except me." This is a form of self-exaltation. What did Jesus just say? He said, "ALL of you are going to be offended; you too Peter."

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"Oh, No, not I." Even though he understands the prophecy, he does not fully understand it spiritually. He might have heard it intellectually but he didn't really understand that this included him. He says, "Oh, no, Lord, that doesn't mean me."

You know how we are; we hear prophecy, we hear truth being preached and what do we do? "Oh the preacher is talking about brother so-and-so. That was for sister so-and-so. Oh I hope my wife was listening! I hope my children are listening to this! Ah! He was really talking to them!" That is what Peter is doing here.

34 "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."

Jesus is again declaring the end of a thing from the beginning. He is telling him before it comes to pass so that when it does come to pass he might believe; He is prophesying again.

35 "Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples."

Here is the second time where Jesus is giving a prophetic message and Peter rejects it. He doesn't even realize that by saying, "No, I'm not going to deny Thee! No, I am ready to die with Thee; I will not forsake Thee," that he is denying the more sure word of prophecy. Even though he loves prophecy, he believes prophecy, but when prophecy is applied to the heart, he does not want to receive it. I wanted you to see that for a reason; Peter believed prophecy, he believed he was ready for the time of trouble. He believed he was ready for the final crisis; he believed he would stand and that he would not forsake his Lord. He believed he was ready and you have to consider he was sincere, but is sincerity enough? No; you can be sincerely wrong. Peter had the theory of the truth, but was the theory enough? Let's find out:

Matthew 26:51 "And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. 52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

It does not say here who did this, but in John 18, John lets you know that this was Peter. Peter took out his sword, and cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest. He was ready to defend his Lord; he was ready to stand. "I said I would die with You Lord and here I want to prove it to You!" but Jesus said, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Keep that in mind.

After this, Jesus was taken and Peter now was tested. It was very cold so he was warming himself at the fire, not just literally, but spiritually he was at the fire, the fiery trial is upon him. Three people came to him and said, "Hey, this man was with Jesus."

"No, No, I wasn't! I wasn't with Him!"

"Wait a minute, you were with Him, I saw you there in the garden!"

"No, that wasn't me, I promise that wasn't me, no!"

The third; "No, I know you are a Galilean, your speech, the way you talk, your language. You're a Seventh-day Adventist. I see the way you eat; I see the way you dress; wait a minute, didn't you

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go to those campmeetings? I saw you taking pictures of those old Millerite charts. You believed that stuff didn't you?"

"Oh no, I didn't believe that, no!"

"You believed that 2520 didn't you?"

"No, I didn't believe that 2520. I know that is not true!"

Matthew 26:74 "Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew."

Remember Jesus said, "Peter, put up that sword; they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Whose character and image was Peter developing and had already begun to manifest? Even though he understood prophecy and he said, "I'm ready for the time of trouble. I will not fall, Lord, I'm ready for the Sunday Law, I'm ready for the Mark of the Beast. I'm going to stand, I'm not getting that Mark!" But he was not realizing that in his character and in his spirit the Image of the Beast was already formed. How do we know?

Revelation 13:9 "If any man have an ear, let him hear. 10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

Who is Jesus talking about here? It is the Papacy. So when Jesus told Peter, "Put up your sword, Peter, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"; why did Jesus say that? It was because Jesus could discern that he had already developed the image of the Beast. He had become just like the Beast; moreover even before that time when Jesus asked the question, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" In one breath you have Peter saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He understood prophecy intellectually; he was a student of prophecy. Then Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon son of Jona, for flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, it was My Father in heaven, but let me tell you something else; the Son of man is going to be put to death, He'll be crucified."

"No, No Lord, that can't happen, be it far from Thee Lord! That won't ever happen!"

Then Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind Me Satan!" so in one instance he understood and recognized prophecy straight away, but then in his character and heart he had the character of Satan, the spirit of Satan and didn't know it. That was back in the beginning, but now at this point when he cut off that servant's ear thinking in his zeal that this is the work of God, he was manifesting the character of the papacy while believing he was ready for the time of trouble.

I wonder if we are guilty of the same thing. I wonder if we, with all our understanding of prophecy and end time events and being able to lay things out, I wonder if it is possible for us at the same time to be developing the image of the Beast and not even know it until the crisis comes? That is what is sad; many of us are not going to recognize our true condition until it is too late.

We know that on the testimony of two a thing is true, so if I am saying that Peter was manifesting the image of the Beast at this point, there must be another witness to that.

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Leviticus 24:10 "And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp; 11 And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:) 12 And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them. 13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 14 Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. 15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. 16 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death."

I find it interesting that this son who blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed, he was part Israelite and part Egyptian; Israelite, Christian; Egyptian, Pagan. Church and State, the Image of the Beast. The Bible says he blasphemed God's name. What was associated with blaspheming His name? Cursing; so when Peter was cursing and swearing, he was blaspheming the name of the Lord. The Bible says, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." So if he was cursing and swearing, that was in his heart, otherwise it would not have come out; it was a part of his character.

We know that the Sunday Law is what will reveal character. It is not the time to develop character; it is in a crisis that character is revealed. This was so in the case of Peter, in his time of trouble his character was revealed and unfortunately it wasn't the Character of Christ. It was the character of antichrist.

Is there another power in prophecy that opens their mouth to blaspheme God's name? Notice, speaking about the leopard-like beast, the papal power, Revelation 13 says:

Revelation 13:6 "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."

So, when Peter was living by the sword he was manifesting the character of the papacy. When he was cursing and swearing, that is connected with blaspheming the name of the Lord; the papacy blasphemes God's name.

What was Peter missing? Did his knowledge of doctrine keep him? What about his knowledge that Jesus was the Son of God? He was missing self-sacrificing Love; that is why Jesus said, "Do you Love Me?" Love would have kept Peter; he didn't have self-sacrificing Love and that is what made his work as a minister a failure.

Are we in danger of doing the same thing today? Especially as the people of prophecy; people that love present truth; people that understand the Sunday Law; the events connected with the Close of Probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, and knowing that those events are clearly revealed in Daniel 11:40-45. Is that enough to keep us when we are tested by the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet like Peter was? We need that work of preparation, it is not enough just to know about it, we have to be preparing.

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“Three times Peter had openly denied his Lord, and three times Jesus drew from him the assurance of his Love and loyalty, pressing home that pointed question, like a barbed arrow to his wounded heart. Before the assembled disciples Jesus revealed the depth of Peter's repentance, and showed how thoroughly humbled was the once boasting disciple.

“Peter was naturally forward and impulsive, and Satan had taken advantage of these characteristics to overthrow him. . {DA 812.2}

Satan took advantage of his unchristlike characteristics and used them to overthrow him. Is Satan seeking to overthrow Adventism at the end of the world? Is Satan working through the right hand of his strength, the papacy, to enter into the glorious land and many will be overthrown? They are going to be overthrown by Satan taking advantage of those characteristics; naturally forward; impulsive; and boasting. How did Satan fall? By the same things; so Satan knows, “If you do these things, I know you will be overthrown just like I was overthrown.”

“Just before the fall of Peter, Jesus had said to him, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Luke 22:31, 32. . .

I am so thankful that Christ prayed for Peter; He knew he was going to manifest the character of Satan in the time of crisis, but Jesus had already prayed for him. If he would have had self-sacrificing Love, then his faith would not have failed him. If he would have had self-sacrificing Love, he would have been converted and strengthened the brethren. When we don't have that self-sacrificing Love, our faith will fail us, just like Ephesus. You hated the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes but now you hold to them. When we are converted, then we can strengthen each other, but if we are unconverted, the only thing we bring to our brethren or families is weakness. We weaken each other with our unchristlike traits. Peter was not converted; he might have understood intellectual doctrine—that Jesus was the Son of God, but he still was not converted.

Suffering in the Flesh

“That time had now come, and the transformation in Peter was evident. The close, testing questions of the Lord had not called out one forward, self-sufficient reply; and because of his humiliation and repentance, Peter was better prepared than ever before to act as shepherd to the flock.

“The first work that Christ entrusted to Peter on restoring him to the ministry was to feed the lambs. This was a work in which Peter had little experience. It would require great care and tenderness, much patience and perseverance. It called him to minister to those who were young in the faith, to teach the ignorant, to open the Scriptures to them, and to educate them for usefulness in Christ's service. Heretofore Peter had not been fitted to do this, or even to understand its importance. But this was the work which Jesus now called upon him to do. For this work his own experience of suffering and repentance had prepared him.” DA 812.

The Bible says whoever has suffered in the flesh, like Jesus, has ceased from sin. Through suffering and now repentance, he is prepared to be that shepherd to the flock.

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"Before his fall, Peter was always speaking unadvisedly, from the impulse of the moment. **He was always ready to correct others**, and to express his mind, before he had a clear comprehension of himself or of what he had to say. . ."

Peter thought himself a 'Corrector of Heretics', quick to correct others while not seeing his own self. Who is the 'Corrector of Heretics'? It is the Papacy; but does that mean we cannot correct one another? We are admonished to correct one another. But Peter did not have self-sacrificing Love and was not correcting in the right spirit.

Jesus said, "As many as I **Love**, I rebuke and chasten." Jesus can rebuke me all He wants because I know that He loves me. The Bible says; "...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." He has earned the right to rebuke me and to chastise me.

"But the converted Peter was very different. He retained his former fervor, but the grace of Christ regulated his zeal. He was no longer impetuous, self-confident, and self-exalted, but calm, self-possessed, and teachable. He could then feed the lambs as well as the sheep of Christ's flock." DA 812.

Self-exaltation is the character of Pagan and Papal Rome and Satan too; but now Peter is calm, self-possessed and teachable.

"The Saviour's manner of dealing with Peter had a lesson for him and for his brethren. It taught them to meet the transgressor with patience, sympathy, and forgiving Love. Although Peter had denied his Lord, **the Love which Jesus bore him never faltered**. Just such Love should the undershepherd feel for the sheep and lambs committed to his care. Remembering his own weakness and failure, Peter was to deal with his flock as tenderly as Christ had dealt with him. DA 815.

When Peter's eyes met the eyes of Jesus, Jesus could have said, "I told you so! I told you that you were going to deny Me!" He could have denounced him. He could have trampled all over him. Jesus didn't have to say anything, that look of Love and pity that Peter read in the Saviour's face, it broke his heart. We are told that he went back to the garden of Gethsemane and right in the spot where Jesus had sweat blood, he knelt down in the bloodied grass and wept; then and there he was washed and he was converted.

"The question that Christ had put to Peter was significant. He mentioned only one condition of discipleship and service. . .

What is that one condition of discipleship and service? You want to be a minister, Bible worker, colporteur, or medical missionary evangelist; what's the one essential qualification?

"Lovest thou Me?" He said. This is the essential qualification. Though Peter might possess every other, yet without the Love of Christ he could not be a faithful shepherd over the Lord's flock. . .

Without Self-sacrificing Love, Peter would be an unfaithful shepherd.

"Knowledge, benevolence, eloquence, gratitude, and zeal are all aids in the good work; but without the Love of Jesus in the heart, the work of the Christian minister is a **failure**." DA 815.

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All these things are important but without Love of Jesus they are not enough. Brethren, this is not love-sick sentimentalism. "Oh, he's getting emotional, he's getting sentimental now." We are talking about "You've left your first Love"; this is the essential qualification. Without this, every other qualification that we have we will still end up being a failure as ministers.

This is why they were strongly rebuked "You've left your first Love. You didn't leave the doctrines; you did not leave the theology which is still correct. You've left the Love, and sooner or later you will give the rest up"; and they did. This is what Peter needed in order to be victorious through the time of trouble. He did not have this one essential qualification and he proved to be a failure. After his conversion no longer was he a 'Corrector of Heretics'.

"He who looks often upon the cross of Calvary, remembering that his sins placed the Saviour there, will never try to estimate the degree of his guilt in comparison with that of others. He will not climb upon the judgment seat to bring accusation against another. There can be no spirit of criticism or self-exaltation on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary's cross.

"Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ and led to seal their hearts against conviction. "A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His word—a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God." Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings Pg. 128.

Without the Self-sacrificing Love of Jesus, we too will prove to be a failure at last. I pray that we won't wait until the Sunday Law only to find out, "Hey, I don't have it! I don't have Self-sacrificing Love." If we wait until then, it is too late.

A Living Principle

"The Love of Christ is not a fitful feeling, but a living principle, which is to be made manifest as an abiding power in the heart. If the character and deportment of the shepherd is an exemplification of the truth he advocates, [the truth made plain upon tables] the Lord will set the seal of His approval to the work. The shepherd and the flock will become one, united by their common hope in Christ." AA 516.

If I am advocating the most wonderful and advanced truths of the Third Angel, but yet my character and deportment does not exemplify what I am advocating then God is not going to put His seal on it; He can't put His seal on it, it is a half-way work. God is not going to seal those who are half-way in His righteousness; half-way reflecting the character of Christ. Sometimes I have His Love and sometimes I have not; no! He is not putting His seal on that. The Mark of the Beast can go on that.

How do we get this Love? This Love is a principle; it is an abiding power. When Peter didn't have Self-sacrificing Love, he lacked power; the very power he needed to stand while in the fire. What

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was being tested? "Yah this man, you were with Him; I know you, I know the way you talk, you are a Millerite, you believe in those charts, you been at those campmeetings."

"No, not me, not me!" He didn't have that power. He didn't have that Love as an abiding principle. He was too much like the Papacy; too much like Satan, there was no Love in him; no genuine Love for Christ.

You might hang on to it for a while, but I promise you as God is my witness, if Self-sacrificing Love is not there, that abiding power is not in you, you are going to give it up, just like Peter gave it up. I don't care how much you preach; how much you have taught; how much you have baptised; how much you have gone around the world; it does not mean anything. I don't care how much light you have come up with and put before God's people; if you are lacking in that your whole career has been a failure. That is something very startling, very sad; it causes me to tremble for my own soul.

Romans 5:1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

How do you get the Love of God in your heart, you have to have the Holy Spirit. Peter did not have the Holy Spirit and so was not prepared to stand. It is through the Spirit that we mortify the deeds of the body; we kill and crucify the flesh.

Peter's Formula

When you read 1 and 2 Peter you can see the power, you can see the glory, you can see the Love of God. He is speaking from experience, it wasn't just head knowledge, it was something he had gone through. Tribulation works patience and patience experience; we gain experience by going through the trials and tribulations and manifesting patience. Peter here gives us a formula, a way by which we never have to fall like he fell.

2 Peter 1:1 "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

We escape the corruption in the world through lust by partaking of His divine nature; having the new man, being born again, being converted. Through the precious promises we get to be partakers of that divine nature.

2 Peter 1:5 "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, [these eight things] and abound, they make you

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that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

Lacking what things; lacking these eight things from faith to charity [agape], the ladder. If you lack these things you are blind and cannot see afar off. If you can't see afar off what does that mean? You have no light, you won't see prophecy, you won't understand. If I don't have faith and virtue and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, I am blind and can't see afar off.

Would you want to trust my interpretation of prophecy and future events if I can't see? But many of us trust to people that are blind when it comes to these things; they can't really see afar off, but we are trusting in their prophetic exposition and teaching. But the Bible just told me that if I don't have these things I am blind and can't see afar off. Can you trust my interpretation of prophecy if I can't see afar off?

9 "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

If you don't have these things, you haven't been purged from your old sins; you are still in your sins; still practicing and living in your sins.

10 "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, **ye shall never fall.**"

You shall never be overthrown. Satan is seeking to sift us like wheat; he is trying to get us to be overthrown through his agent the King of the North.

11 "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

An entrance will be opened? To where? The Kingdom of Heaven; the Lord just showed you your passport into heaven, if you have those things, Faith to Charity, all eight of those things. God has opened the gates of heaven for everyone to enter in, but you have to have these things.

2 Peter 1:12 "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."

We are in danger of forgetting these eight things—from Faith to Charity and leaving our first Love. Be established in the Present Truth; what is the Present Truth? It is our message, but we can't be established in the Present Truth without these eight things, Faith to Charity.

Peter knew full well, he's recounting his experience; thinking he was established in Present Truth; that he could see afar off; that he was purged from his old sins and fruitful in the knowledge of Christ; and had escaped the corruptions of his own lusts; all those things. Did his human nature fail him, his carnal nature? Yes. Did he have Self-sacrificing Love? No. It is interesting that on Peter's ladder Faith is at the bottom; charity is at the top.

"Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and prepare the mind for the reception of the knowledge of God." AA 531

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Faith; the faith of the Gospel, of this message, is the base of the ladder. We get so excited, we're so happy because we have these tables and charts; but we're just at the beginning of the way. We still need to climb and strive and overcome; we can't stop here! All this was given to us to lead us on to Charity; Self-sacrificing Love. Peter didn't have it; he didn't have the divine nature so he wasn't established in the Present Truth.

We won't be established in the Present Truth without these things. We won't have the gates of heaven open to us if we are not established in these things. We won't be able to see afar off; we'll still be in our Luke-warm Laodicean blindness. Without these things in us, we are going to fall over and over again. We'll keep on falling until we're finally overthrown at the Sunday Law; Daniel 11:41.

I want to point out the message that is encoded in these verses.

2 Peter 1:8 "For if these things be in you, [these eight things] and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

What knowledge of Jesus do we need to be fruitful in?

2 Corinthians 4:6 "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

When we are fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, this means we have received the knowledge of His glory and are prepared to give the knowledge of that glory because we are reflecting it in our very characters. Being fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, this is the First Angel; giving Him glory. You receive the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ that you might reflect that same glory in your face, countenance and life.

2 Peter 1:9 "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

Somebody that is blind gropes in the darkness, they stagger and fall like a drunken man. They are the Drunkards of Ephraim, drunken with the Wine of Babylon. Drinking the wine of Babylon you fall; Babylon is fallen is fallen; the Second Angel's Message. God wants to bring us out of there. We're brought out from our old sins. We are not blind, not stumbling and groping like drunken men; we can see afar off.

Babylon does not see afar off; she does not understand prophecy correctly. When Nebuchadnezzar had his dream, he called the magicians and astrologers of Babylon. "I dreamed a dream, tell me the interpretation." "Oh King, tell us the dream and we will show the interpretation."

"I would do that but I don't remember it. So you tell me what I dreamed and tell me what it means."

"Oh King, we can't do that!" they could not because they can't see afar off; they did not understand the more sure word of prophecy. That is Babylon; they are in confusion

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2 Peter 1:10 "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, **ye shall never fall:**"

You will never fall, never be overthrown by the King of the North at the Sunday Law. What message is that? This is the Third Angel's Message.

2 Peter 1:11 "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The Bible says: Revelation 22:14 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Revelation 14:12 "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

2 Peter 1:12 "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."

This is the Fourth Angel's Message; when you are established the Present Truth, you are on the platform, you are settled, you're sealed, you won't be moved. Now having these things you can escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. The power that corrupts the world with her fornication is the Great Whore Babylon.

Revelation 19:2 "For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand."

You've escaped those corruptions; you're not drinking the wine of Babylon; you have the character of Christ and the truth for these times, so you are now eligible to give the warning, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, come out of her my people. Don't be partakers of her sins; you'll receive her plagues."

Because you have escaped all this, what will happen when the King of the North comes into the Glorious land and many are overthrown? Edom, Moab and Ammon escape and then he goes into the countries of Egypt and no one escapes. But you will be able to escape; if you have the Divine Nature you will be able to escape all these things and then be able to give those tidings out of the East and the North.

Brethren; God is trying to show us we are living at the End of the World; probation is about to close and Jesus is about to come. It is nearer than when we first believed. Our doctrines may be correct, our theology straight, but if Self-sacrificing Love is missing, the only thing, the best we can do, is develop the Image of the Beast in preparation for the Mark of the Beast. Peter's fall and restoration is a warning to us. It is a lesson of the power of Self-sacrificing and redeeming Love.