

# *How to Tell Someone the Good News*

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## ***Study Seven: Current Events and Bible Prophecy***

### ***I. BRIEF REVIEW OF OUR OBJECTIVES.***

1. According to Proverbs 11:30, how do we prepare now to eat of the fruit of the tree of life?

Note: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (KJV). "Godly men are growing a tree that bears life-giving fruit, and all who win souls are wise" (Living Bible). In a very real sense, our happiness in the world to come will depend largely on what we do in this world. The import of this text is that here and now we plant the "seed" that will bear fruit there on "the tree of life." (The Hebrew supports the KJV and LB reading.)

2. In this light, how can we understand Jesus' strange parable of the unjust steward? Luke 16: 1-9.

Note: Jesus is not commending dishonesty, as some have supposed: (a) All of us, being sinful mortals, are slated to lose our "stewardship." (b) Let us use what resources we have left to us to "make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," that is, to "win souls" who can receive us (welcome us) "into e

verlasting habitations." (c) Living henceforth to "win souls" is therefore good common sense! (See the song in the frontispiece.)

### ***II. SEVERAL BIBLE PROPHECIES THAT MUST NOT BE MISUNDERSTOOD.***

1. Does anyone have a right to "interpret" Bible prophecy? 1 Peter 1:20, 21.
2. Who are the two central figures in the Daniel 8 prophecy? Dan. 8:9, 11, 25.
3. How does Daniel 8 make clear the issues in the great cosmic controversy between Christ and Satan? How do Seventh-day Adventists fit in? Verses 9-14.

Note: This passage is the foundation text for the rise of Seventh-day Adventists. The "little horn" is the great empire of Rome in its two phases: pagan and papal. Its war is fought against Christ and against His faithful people. The "good news" is introduced in an oblique way that thoughtful Jews of Daniel's day would understand. At the end of 2300 years of oppression, resolution of the great cosmic controversy would finally come about through the antitypical Day of Atonement, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. This 2300-year prophecy ended in 1844. Its real meaning is the honor and vindication of God in the final defeat of Satan and sin. When Daniel understood this, it made sense to him.

4. How does Revelation further make clear the prophecy of Daniel 8? Rev. 10:7; 11:15-19; 14:6,7, 14, 15.
5. How can we know that ordinary wars are not yet the battle of Armageddon? Rev. 16:12-17.

Note: We must let the scriptures explain themselves: (a) The battle of Armageddon does not come until the sixth plague, (b) The plagues come only after probation has closed (Rev. 15:1; cf. Heb. 3:2). (c) At that time Christ has ceased His ministry as High Priest and has left the Most Holy Apartment (15:8; 22:11, 12; Isa. 55:6).

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 425).

Thank God that the time has not yet come! There is still opportunity for repentance and soul-winning. Although the plagues are literal, the language of Revelation 16 is symbolic. "The beast," "the dragon," "the false prophet" of verse 13, are all symbolic. Evidently the history of Daniel 5 is evoked in this symbol. As Cyrus' army dried the waters of the Euphrates so he could capture Babylon, so in the sixth plague the defenses and support of modern symbolic Babylon will collapse, and she will face her final judgment in history.

6. What great work must be accomplished now? Matt. 24:14; Rev. 18:1-4; Zech. 8:21-23; 12:8; 13:1.
7. Has Daniel 11:44, 45 met its fulfillment as yet?

Note: Not unless probation has already closed, for the next verse (12:1) says "at that time shall Michael stand up" (begin to reign as King of kings). Thank God, He is still our High Priest!

8. Can we believe that the pioneers of the Advent Movement were led of the Lord in their understanding of Daniel and Revelation?

Note: According to Revelation 10:6, there is to be no more prophetic "time" after the end of the 2300-year prophecy. Therefore the "days" of Daniel 12 cannot be understood as literal, but are an emphasis by repetition of the time prophecies of Daniel 7 and 8 with the added specifics of "the daily" in order to reinforce its mention in 8:11-13 and 11:31. There was no serious error in the pioneers' understanding of the prophecies; if they had welcomed "the message of Christ's righteousness" in 1888, the gospel commission could have been completed and the earth have been lighted with the fourth angel's message, in their generation {Selected Messages, book 1, pp. 234, 235}.

### **III. IN STUDYING THE PROPHECIES, WHAT IS THE TRUE MOTIVATION THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN BLESS?**

1. Note the motivation that inspires God's people in the close of the Day of Atonement. Rev. 19:6, 7; 10:6, 7, 11:15, 19.

Note: Like a bride concerned for the honor of her husband, God's people will be concerned to "give honor to Him [the Lamb]" rather than seek for their own security. The vindication of His name is the great issue involved in the Day of Atonement.

2. Who are "false prophets" today? Read 2 Peter 1:20; 2:1, 2.

Note: We are warned against all "time-setting." We are also warned against "new theories," "a new exposition of those prophecies which [God] has, by His Holy Spirit, moved upon His chosen servants to explain."\*

3. What true motivation will lead us to follow the Lord all the way? 2 Cor. 5:14-21.

Note: "It is not the fear of punishment, or the hope of everlasting reward, that leads the disciples of Christ to follow Him. They behold the Saviour's matchless love, revealed throughout His pilgrimage on earth, from the manger of Bethlehem to Calvary's cross, and the sight of Him attracts, it softens and subdues the soul. Love awakens in the heart of the beholder. They hear His voice, and they follow Him" {The Desire of Ages, p. 480}.

4. What remains, therefore, the burden of our message? 1 Cor. 2:1-4.

#### ***IV. WHAT ARE THE BIBLE REQUIREMENTS FOR BAPTISM?***

1. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

Note: In the context of what Jesus said, it is clear that the "believing" is a heart-response of appreciation for the Good News of the "gospel" that is presented to them (verse 15). If the heart has been won by the love of Christ (agape) rather than an egocentric motivation, there is serious hope that the ones converted will never fall away (1 Cor. 13:8), even if they meet stumbling blocks.

2. "Teach ... them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20).
3. A verse-by-verse review of Romans 6:1-17 is very important.

Note: You can be sure that the Holy Spirit will add His blessing to such a study. Our goal is not merely to add another statistic to the church membership roll or to get a report in the Union paper. We want our "someone" to stand at last on the sea of glass, in triumphant victory. Go through the thirteen points in the baptismal certificate; you can present them in a Good News context. And always praise God for the joy He gives you in sharing His message of grace!

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Footnote: \* Selected Messages, book 1, pp. 185-192; Selected Messages, book 2, pp. 73, 82; 109-116; The Great Controversy, pp. 457, 465.