



Don't Give Up

Message for February 2019 – 15

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Reform Movement

YOUTH DEPARTMENT OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

My dear youth:

I greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and ask that His blessings, love, and direction be upon you abundantly.

A human attitude

I would like to share with you the text of Deuteronomy 5:33, **“You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.”**

This text invites us to go forward without fainting, without surrendering, along the path that God has appointed for us. One day we decided to follow Christ and embarked on our pilgrimage to the heavenly Canaan. If we compare our experience with that of the people of Israel, we will find many similarities. Israel was slave to the Egyptians and worked hard for them, without rights, without possibility of negotiation, without hope. Is not this what happens in the world? When people live without God they are slaves to something or someone; there are thousands of things that trap and invalidate them. Is not being reliant on a vice true slavery? What freedom is there in following the criteria of the majority

even though they are not the most convenient, logical, and ethical? For example, committing an abortion because one does not want the child. The general consensus is that the woman owns her own body and must decide whether the child will be born or not. What kind of healthy freedom is there in the decision to take an innocent life? Many are slaves of sex, social fads, gambling, animal abuse, money, technology. What are you slaves of, dear youth?

While one is a slave to the world, he cannot be happy, “for the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.” Galatians 5:17. What kind of life can we live if it is not inspired by Christ, the author of existence itself? What would happen, dear youth, if our music equipment were placed inside the bathtub? You already know the answer. And who would do this? Only someone who lost his reasoning. But do we not place our life in a dangerous situation when we do contrary to what our Creator has indicated to us? Each of us also come to this world with a “user manual”; and that manual is the Bible. If we ignore His instructions and indications, we will be lost.

Leaving the world

As the people of Israel were liberated from their centuries-old slavery, God also “... called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9. But just as Israel during her pilgrimage to the earthly Canaan had to face innumerable trials, so also each of us as spiritual Israel will have to deal with difficulties and problems in our walk towards the heavenly Canaan. The desert is hostile, during the day it is hot and at night it is cold, various beasts and dangerous animals stalk the traveler, there are many violent robbers who live by thievery, water and food are scarce. But we must remember that God pledged to take care of His people and He did, even though Israel turned its back on many occasions: “But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, And did not destroy them. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath.” Psalm 78:38.

One of the lessons that I like most about the Bible is the attitude of God against the weak men and women who falter. He invites us to continue, not to give up. The key to victory is not to remain fallen, but to rise and continue. Like the prodigal son who sank in the deep pit of sin and yet, by the call of the Holy Spirit, he was convinced that he had to change course: “I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.” Luke 15:18. He did so and the Father accepted him back into his house.

God’s invitation

Dear youth, I know that it is not easy to remain faithful in the desert of life; sometimes the old cries of Egypt come back to our hearts. Sometimes the temptations are so strong that it is not easy to overcome them, especially when fighting without God's help. But do not be fooled by the enemy. His strategy is to make you fall and then whisper in your ear that you have no remedy, that you have already filled the glass of God's mercy. Do not listen to this, it's not true. God sent his Son Jesus Christ to this world to save sinners (Luke 5:32). It's not that God loves that we sin, no, He abhors sin, but He loves the sinner and wants

to free him from that terrible yoke. Dear young people, if the devil defeated you in a battle, do not surrender, make yours the biblical words and treasure them in your heart: “And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.” When you feel under pressure and you are invaded by discouragement and doubt, tell the devil: “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7. Do not give up, please, do not turn away from Jesus or from his church that he himself founded. Abandon the way of wickedness and “... return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.” Isaiah 55:7.

Have you heard well, youth? The Lord is “ample in forgiving.” When he became incarnate, Jesus taught the same thing: “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.” John 6:37. Doubt not. There is no point in traveling miles and miles through the desert and suddenly falling down and letting yourself die. I have had the privilege of being in a desert and when you walk on the sand dunes, you take one step but you go back two. To move forward, a great effort must be made. In the secular world to surrender is to lose, it is the end. In sports, in studies, in work and family life, in finances, in social relationships, in war... surrender is failure. Successful men and women are not people who have never failed in their personal businesses, but those who in spite of the blows decided to go ahead and not give up. Thomas A. Edison failed almost more than a thousand times before discovering the electric light bulb. When he was asked he expressed it this way: “I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.” This genius saw failure as an opportunity to learn and excel in life. If he had given up, he would never have reached his goal.

Conclusion

Dear youth, if the Lord Jesus had given up His redeeming work because of the great pressure he felt on his shoulders, there would be no redemption. His humanity staggered but he clung to the hand of the Father and an angel came to remind him how much was at stake. He did not come to take His cup, but to help Him take it. How wonderful it is that Christ did not give up! His love led Him to fulfill His mission to the ultimate consequence. We are also going to receive help, despite our failures, if we humbly turn to God and ask for power to continue and persevere. Rise up, youth, do not stay in the mud lamenting your fall. Arise and go back to the Father who will be ample in forgiving. God bless you. Amen.

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