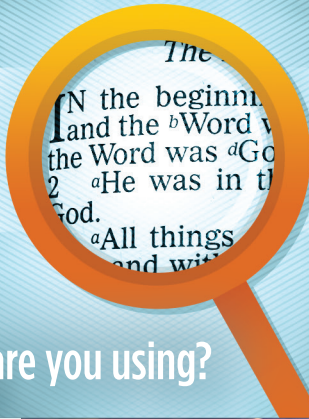


BIBLE OPTICS



What lens are you using?

The WORD or the world?

This issue:

01. *What is Jesus Doing in Heaven Now?*
04. *James White, Ardent Worker for Christ*
05. *Are You a Consumer or a Producer?*
07. *Q&A - How Do I Receive the Holy Spirit?*
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From the Editor

James White is one of my heroes. He was a pioneer in the Advent movement of the 19th century, a fervent follower of Christ, and a prolific writer. Not content to live by other men's teachings on the Bible, he joined others in searching out the foundational truths of the Bible.

One of their exciting discoveries was Jesus' mediatorial work in the heavenly sanctuary. They learned that Jesus' work there has everything to do with our transformation here. This is the the topic of our first article, "What is Jesus doing in heaven now?"

Elder White also lived out another biblical truth—that each of us is called to be an active worker for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. (See "Are you a Consumer or Producer"). He worked incessantly to bring others to the Savior he loved. "God forbid that I should fold my arms in lazy-lock while sinners are sinking to eternal night," he said.

May that be our conviction too!



What is Jesus doing in Heaven Now?

Can you think of a place where you're always welcome with smiles and open arms? Many of us find this in our parents' home. For others it's the home of a best friend.

Did you know that there is a place where we can all share smiles and be received with open arms? As children of God, we are all given the key to our Father's house. We can visit any time. It's the best place to get to know Him. The desire of the believer is to "dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple" (Psalms 27:4 KJV).

After He ascended, Jesus entered the Father's house (the Heavenly Temple) to begin His ministry as High Priest (Hebrews 4:13). Though we cannot physically be there with Jesus,



Marshall McKenzie | Editor
Church Growth Director, KTYN Conference



we can follow Him into the heavenly temple by faith. We are welcome to “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6) because we are “members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).

Like the Hebrew priests before Him, Jesus ministered in the Holy Place before entering the Most Holy Place. This month we will look at Jesus’ work in the Holy Place and what it means for us here on earth.

A Holy Place Message

The ministry of the Holy Place in the earthly sanctuary was a continual ministry. Its services continued through the Day of Atonement. Day and night the seven-branch candlestick was kept burning, the altar of incense continually perfumed the air, and every Sabbath fresh bread was placed on the table of shewbread. The priests offered daily sacrifices for the sins of Israel. Each day penitent sinners could bring sacrifices and receive forgiveness for their sins.

The lesson here in this daily ministry is that Jesus is always waiting and willing to receive His wayward children. He loves to have us come for a visit to His house, to share our concerns, our sorrows, and our griefs. He wants to lift us up, to remove our burdens—the greatest of which is sin—and set us free to smile again and feel His love.

When Jesus ascended to heaven, He took up the ministry of the Holy Place in the Heavenly Temple. There, He “always lives to make intercession” (Hebrews 7:25) for us. Jesus is both our sacrificial Lamb and mediating Priest. As the Lamb of God, His blood reconciles us to God so that we can be welcomed into our Father’s house. This means that when we accept Him as Savior, we receive His perfect life in place of our ugly sinful life. We are not only forgiven of past sins, but we now live the righteous life that He has given to us. We may exclaim with Paul, “I have

been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

““ Each day penitent sinners could bring sacrifices and receive forgiveness for their sins.

Christ’s daily work in the holy place is all about transformation. He is in the business of forming His character within us by the power of the Holy Spirit. When He does, the fruits of the Spirit—“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,”—become our way of life (Galatians 5:22,23 KJV). The

burdens are lifted. We leave with an incredible gift!

A Temple Remains

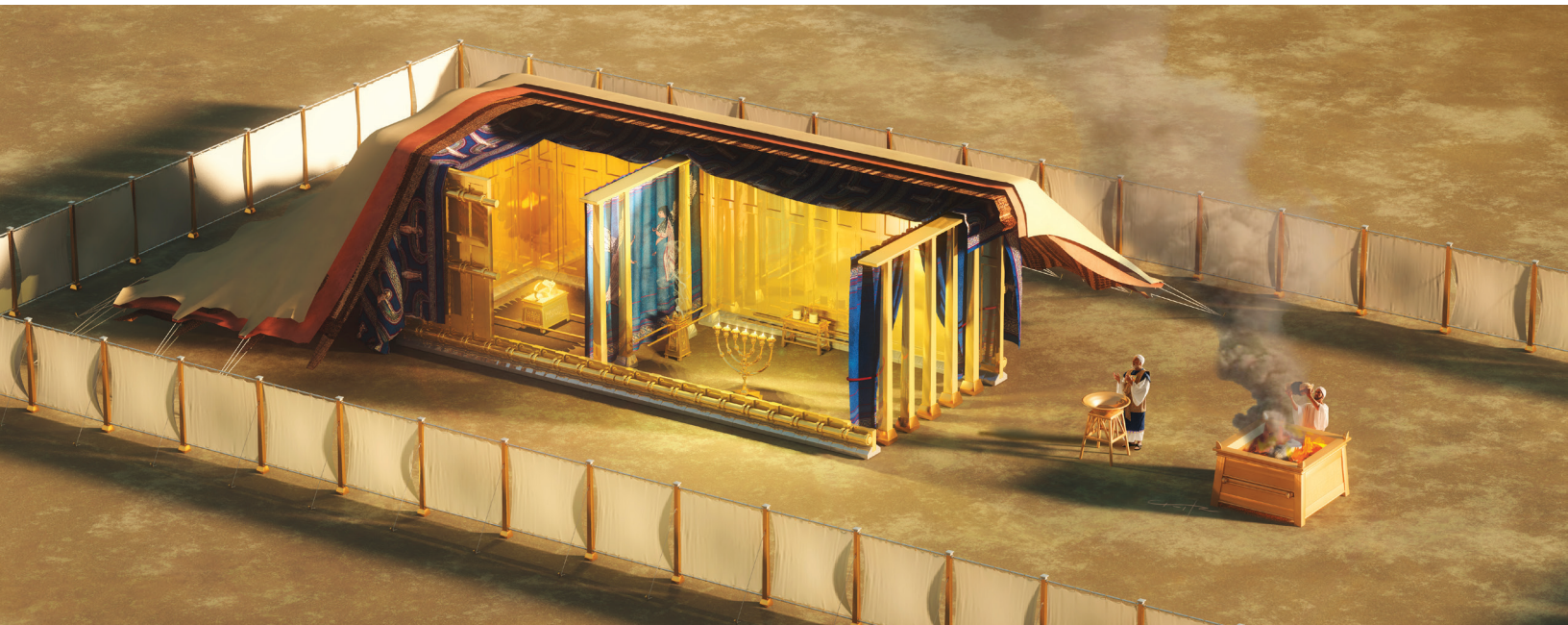
When Jesus died, the veil of the earthly temple was ripped in two by a supernatural force. The shadow of things to come met its fulfillment. Jesus’ sacrifice opened the heavenly temple to all the world (Hebrews 10:20). It became “a house of prayer for all people” (Isaiah 56:7 KJV). The sacrifices of the earthly sanctuary were no longer needed. The Jewish temple would eventually be destroyed by the Romans.

Yet God still has a temple on Earth. Us—His church. We are “being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:22). The Holy Spirit’s work in and among Christians corresponds to Christ’s work in Heaven on our behalf.

Holy Place Gifts

“Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8).

The temple in heaven is the great command center from which Christ directs the Spirit’s work in His earthly temple. When our Lord “ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men” (Ephesians 4:8). “He Himself gave



some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11,12). This is the work of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with Christ’s ministry in Heaven (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Not only was the Spirit manifested at Pentecost, but He also continues to equip God’s church today. The spiritual gifts we receive from Christ’s ministry in heaven give us the ability to complete His mission on earth. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives us the ability to love the unlovely, share unselfishly, and seek after God. Without the Holy Spirit’s power, the church can do nothing.

Dwelling in the Temple

The Father’s house is open to all who will enter by faith. In these uncertain times, it is the only safe place. “In the time of trouble, He shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle, He shall hide me” (Psalms 27:5).

But what does it mean to dwell in the Father’s house? Each piece of furniture in the Holy Place points to a spiritual discipline that characterizes our daily lives when we dwell in the Father’s house.



The table of showbread with its loaves of bread symbolizes Christ as the Word of God (John 6:35, Matthew 4:4). When we study the Bible personally and with others, Christ is there to break bread with us as the Spirit unfolds the mysteries of the Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:12).



The altar of incense invites us to present our petitions before the throne of God (Revelation 8:4, Psalm 141:2). When we offer prayer at the altar of incense, we are brought into the Father’s presence where “the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us” (Romans 8:26).



The seven-branched candlestick symbolizes our role as lights in the world. As we communicate the Gospel in word and deed, we reflect Jesus, the Light of the world, from the seven-branch candlestick. At the same time, the Spirit is there to help us witness with boldness (Acts 4:31).

Do you dwell in the house of the Lord through daily Bible study, earnest prayer, and willing service? You can. Jesus is holding the door open for you, inviting you to spend time with Him in the Father’s house. By entering that open door, you become a resident in the Father’s house. He dwells in you through faith and nothing can bring more joy to both of you.

By: John Cloud

DIG DEEPER

Exodus 29:38 - 46; Exodus 30:7,8; Leviticus 24:1 - 9; Leviticus 16:5

James White

Ardent Worker of Christ



James White stepped purposefully onto the train, a silent prayer ascending for God to lead him to a soul in need. He strode through each car, his earnest eyes scanning the faces of the people on the backless benches. He was looking for “some individual whose face seemed to indicate that the Holy Spirit was working on his heart.”¹ Suddenly his eyes lit up and a smile spread beneath his beard. He hurried to the empty seat beside a young man hunched over his trunk.

“Hello there! May I sit beside you?”

The youth gave a slight nod. James seated himself and they began to converse. By the end of the train ride, they were friends and the young man had accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. Joy filled them both as they parted.

Elder James White, co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was a passionate missionary for Christ throughout his long life of service. Witnessing on the train was just one of the ways he sought to share the good news of the gospel. His missionary endeavors included extensive traveling and preaching, establishing the Seventh-day Adventist publishing work, setting up church organization, and serving as General Conference president on three separate occasions.

Yet James was not always so focused for Christ. He began life sickly and skeptical. As a boy, he was often ill and so cross-eyed that he could barely read. At age 19, his health and eyesight sufficiently improved allowing him to attend school for 12 weeks. By studying 18 hours a day he learned enough to earn his teaching certificate and become a teacher. Sometime later he attended an advanced school for 17 weeks. “I have attended high school, in all, twenty-nine weeks,” he wrote, “and the entire cost of tuition, books, and board, has not exceeded fifty dollars.”²

James was quite skeptical when his mother introduced him to the Advent

message. It wasn’t long, however, before he became convinced that Jesus would return in 1844. He shared the good news with his students and many of them were converted. Convinced that he “must immediately go out into the great harvest-field”, he prepared three sermons and set out in the dead of winter to

preach in the neighboring towns. One thousand people accepted Christ through his preaching.

1844 passed and James “wept like a baby” that Christ did not return. Yet his faith was undimmed. He and his new wife, Ellen Harmon, joined other Advent believers in continuing to study God’s Word. They discovered new truths which convinced

them that they were following God.

James and Ellen worked constantly for other’s salvation, often denying themselves of necessities in order to put more into God’s work. James “suffered from dyspepsia and overwork and was often weak from hunger because of his poverty... Yet he worked, traveled, preached and wrote constantly. ‘God forbid that I should fold my arms in lazy-lock while sinners are sinking to eternal night,’ he said.”³

To James, it was the greatest joy to give all for God. “I rejoice today that ease, pleasure and comfort in this life are a sacrifice on the altar of my faith and hope... The true disciple will not live to gratify beloved self, but for Christ, and for the good of His little ones,”⁴ he concluded.

By: Shenalyn Page

¹ Ochs, Daniel & Grace, *The Past and the Presidents*, Southern Adventist Publishing Association, p. 29

² James White, *Life Incidents* [Paradise Press, 1972], p. 14

³ Ochs, Daniel & Grace, *The Past and the Presidents*, Southern Adventist Publishing Association, p. 29-30

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24



Are you a Consumer or a Producer?

The kingdom of heaven is like...

One day the C.E.O of a fortune 500 investment company sat in his corner office 40 stories up. As he overlooked the financial district of lower Manhattan, he decided he wanted to invest more of his wealth to provide good things for his neighborhood. He was excited about his new business venture. That very day he called his top three investment banking associates to the office and told them his wish. They were eager to help him make this dream a reality. The C.E.O gave \$5 million to the first associate, \$2 million to the second, and \$1 million to the third. 'See what you can do for our neighborhood with this money,' he counseled.

At first the associates were unsure just how they would deal with the money they had just received. After much contemplation, the first associate decided to invest in creating jobs in low-income neighborhoods. By so doing, he not only helped many people find jobs, but created five million more dollars for his C.E.O. The second associate invested in the shipping business. This improved the community and brought in an additional revenue of \$2 million. The final associate was less adventurous. He simply placed the money in his desk and kept it safe, believing that this was the best way to protect the C.E.O.'s money.

When the C.E.O. reviewed the annual reports of the company, he noticed the investments the first two associates had made with the money. They had proved so profitable that he promoted them for their efforts, making them directors over a much greater portion of the company. The third employee, however, was carefully scrutinized for his delinquency and laziness. This associate had chosen not to do anything valuable with the money. The CEO had no other choice but to fire the lazy man.

Consume, Consume, Consume

Jesus told His version of the "the parable of the talents" in Matthew 25:14-30. His point? His followers are to be producers, not consumers.

Yet we live in a consumer's paradise, don't we? One-click on Amazon will bring almost anything to your home address. Hungry? A moment on your smartphone and 20 minutes later your favorite takeout is delivered to your doorstep. Our collective instant gratification lifestyle costs \$10 trillion annually and has increased by 1.5 percent per year for 10 years ([U.S. consumer spending](#)).

Our consumerism tends to rob us of our spiritual lives. Many of us have become spiritual consumers rather than producers.

What You Have is not Yours

The servant in Christ's parable who does not invest his talent is a fitting representation of a typical modern-day consumer. The servant's problem, which eventually led to his dismissal, was that he took what his master gave him and did nothing profitable with it. Today, this same attitude is what is causing our personal consumption expenditures to increase every single year. Our unwritten slogan is "Never enough! Give me more."

We have stockpiled stuff and hoarded the blessings God meant for us to share with others. The parable reminds us of one simple truth. What you have is not your own. Everything belongs to God. He gives us what we need so we can be profitable Christians. If singing is your talent, then use that to draw souls to the kingdom. If you are an artist, create art that glorifies God. If you are an engineer, use your career to influence people to follow Christ.

NEXT ISSUE: WHAT DOES THE PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS IN MATTHEW 25 HAVE TO DO WITH OUR LIVES TODAY? WE ALSO LOOK AT TWO TIMES WHEN GOD ALLOWED MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF HIS CHILDREN.

Use what God has given you for the good of others. Do not be a spiritual glutton, just satisfying your own personal needs. Instead do good to others, not just yourself.

Faithful with the Few

“Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (Matthew 25:23). The two words we should strive to hear at the end of our time on this earth are, “well done”. The servants who will hear these words are those that were not merely consumers but were also contributors. They were faithful in the small things that God gave them. Whether it was time, money or ability, they used it to multiply the Kingdom of heaven.

It is important to notice that the employees invested all they were given. They didn't invest what they didn't have. They simply invested what they were given. This is an important lesson for the growing Christian. God does not ask you to give what you do not have. Yet Christ has given you something of the greatest value, the gospel. You are not simply to go to church every week, consume the gospel and keep it to yourself. This is how we have become unprofitable Christians and spiritual hoarders. As a Christian we are to learn the gospel, in order to give the gospel to others. Simply put – We Learn in order to Give.



How to Be a Producer

1. Identify your talents - What are some of the things that you are good at, i.e encouraging others, preparing food, logistics, etc. (1 Peter 4:10)
2. Look for the needs - Identify areas in your community where you can be the most effective. Ask your local pastor what roles need to be filled in your church. (Nehemiah 1 & 2)
3. Seek help from your local pastor - Ministry can be a heavy task. Ask your local pastor for help to get the job done. (Ecclesiastes 4:9)
4. Be creative - We serve a creative God, and He has imbued us all with imagination. Seek new and inventive ideas in serving others. (Ephesians 2:10)
5. Pray, Pray, Pray - The Holy Spirit is the one that gives gifts and enables us to use them. Seek His help and guidance. (1 Thessalonians 5:16)

Your greatest duty on earth is to take that which Christ has given you and use it for good. Luke 12:48 says, “To whom much is given, much will be required”. Do not become consumed by your own consumption, for this will lead you to darkness and pain. God has given you a great task. Be a profitable servant for His kingdom and invest in others.

By: Elijah Ramjattan

DIG DEEPER

Matthew 25:13-30; Christ's Object Lessons, p. 325-365.



Bible Q&A

How do I Receive the Holy Spirit?

God has promised to “pour out [His] Spirit on all flesh” (Joel 2:28). But do you have the assurance that you have personally received the Holy Spirit? You absolutely can!

Faith is the key to knowing we have received the Holy Spirit each day. Galatians 3:14 says that we “receive the promise of the Spirit by faith.”

Faith means that when we have prayed for the Holy Spirit, we are to trust that God has given us His Spirit. Then we can thank Him for the gift, and act as though we have the Spirit, even if we don’t feel any different than we did before we prayed. “Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you have, and you will have them” (Mark 11:24).

But God does not ask us to have blind faith. He has given us His promises to lean on. Daily claiming God’s promises for the Holy Spirit in faith will give you the assurance that God is giving you His Spirit.

“When we have a promise from God and have fulfilled the requirements, then there is only one possibility—that we receive the promise.”

What are God’s requirements for receiving the Spirit?

- A yearning for God – John 7:37
- Belief in God – John 7:38
- Complete surrender to God – Romans 12:1-2
- Following God in everything (obedience) – Acts 5:32
- Repentance – Acts 2:38, Psalm 66:18
- Realize and admit your great need – Luke 11:5-8
- Ask persistently and continually – Luke 11:9-13

Won’t you try it? Prayerfully claim these promises in faith each day and see what God will do in answer to your prayers.

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (John 5:14-15).

¹Haubeil, Helmut, *Steps to Personal Revival*, Top Life Center, 2015, p. 80

? GOT A QUESTION ABOUT THE JUDGMENT?

Tell us your questions about judgment in the Bible and we’ll give you a Biblical answer in an upcoming issue.

Is there another topic you’d like us to address?

Tell us what it is!

Send your questions to: godled@kytn.net.

DIG DEEPER

To learn more about how to experience the infilling of the Holy Spirit each day, we recommend the free e-book, *Steps to Personal Revival*, by Helmut Haubeil, available [HERE](#).

A God-Led Conversation, Part 4

How to be Changed by Bible Study

Are you ready for the most exciting—and challenging—part of Bible study? It's called biblical application and it's the culmination of everything we've learned over the last few months. God cannot apply His truths to our lives unless we have joined Him in conversation and really listened to Him through Biblical reading and thinking.

Biblical application happens like this:

God uses the biblical ideas He's shown you to either confirm, or challenge, your current thoughts and life practices. You may also find that old ideas re-surface. This is all part of being **“transformed by the renewing of your mind.”** [Romans 12:2](#)

Our characters are determined by the thoughts and ideas we have collected over the years. Some are God's and some are the world's. But which is which? When we systematically read Scripture in context, God's ideas and thoughts become clear. As they do, God gently applies them to our thoughts and ideas, compelling us to decide. Will we stay with our pre-conceived ideas? Or adopt God's thoughts and line our lives up with them?

The choice is ours. God never forces us to choose His thoughts and ways. But I assure you, there is no better choice to make.

Dear Father, I pray that you would bless my friend in their Bible study. Help them to understand Your truths and be willing to change in the ways You have shown them. Thank you for working the transformation in them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Apply It:

As you read the Bible, ask God to confirm or challenge your thoughts. Write down the things He shows you and prayerfully surrender them to God. Then make a plan to follow through on the things God has shown you.

What Application Looks Like in My Life

“Wait a minute! When did Jesus start giving the answers?!”

I was studying Luke 2 and the disconnect between verses 46 and 47 suddenly hit me. In verse 46 the boy Jesus is “sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.” In the next verse “all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.”

“Where was the transition?” I wondered. As I prayed and studied, the Holy Spirit showed me the answer: Jesus waited to share until the priests started asking him questions.

Then God showed me that I needed to follow Jesus' example in working with people. I began to ask people questions instead of telling them the solutions. They usually respond with questions of their own. This is the clue that they are ready to listen to the Biblical answers I long to share.

By: Pastor Marshall McKenzie



Pastor Marshall McKenzie

*Church Growth Director
KYTN Conference*

Our goal is to help you grow in your understanding of key Bible teachings, gain a Biblical perspective on what is happening in our world today, and find tools to share your faith more effectively.

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