

Pr Ernie Wojnar: The Church & It's Identity (1/2/20)

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 8:7-14

In every country there are monuments and memorials set up to remember significant events from the past.

God also has monuments and memorials that call us to remember. The 10 commandments are an example of this.

"Remember," He said, "that I have created you." You have been intentionally created for purpose, meaning and fulfilment.

The monuments of scripture remind us that we need Him - our creator.

Why do we need them? You may ask. Because we have a tendency to forget!

"Beware that you don't forget the LORD your God." **Deuteronomy 8:11**

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and his teaching in our past history." Ellen White, Testimonies to the Church, Volume 9, pg 10

"And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: 'When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?' then you shall let your children know, saying, 'Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land'; for the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever.'" Joshua 4:20-24

As Joshua led the children of Israel into the promised land, he felt that it was good reason to set up a monument that they not forget.

History has shown that as a monument gets momentum and becomes respectable - maybe third or fourth generation - it has a tendency to forget the pillars upon which the movement is built, causing it to lose its mission.

As Seventh-day Adventists we often forget:

1. Who we are.
2. Why we exist.
3. Where we are today.

Who We Are

Alzheimer's disease is on the rise today. It is such a sad disease. As it effects people, it causes them to forget who they are.

If we fail to 'remember' our history, we are in danger of loosing our identity. We are loosing sight of who we are.

"Lest—when you have eaten and are [a]full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

Deuteronomy 8:12-14

We are in such danger of complacency and forgetfulness because we have so much.

We need to be wary of pride in our hearts - lest we forget who we are. We are merely the recipients of God's blessings - not the origin of those blessings.

Why We Exist

We have been called as a movement to bring about restoration.

"Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In." **Isaiah 58:12**

We are called upon to be restorers of paths, repairers of the breach.

We are called upon to lift Jesus higher than He has ever been lifted before.

We are called to preach the Three Angels Messages to a dying world.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."

Matthew 28:19,20

Go and tell the world what Jesus has done for you.

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." **Matthew 24:14**

We must have a daily relationship with Jesus if we'll have anything of value to share with the world.

We exist to share the light of Jesus with the world - not to hide our light under a bushel.

"Seventh-day Adventists, above all people, should be patterns of piety, holy in heart and in conversation. To them have been entrusted the most solemn truths ever committed to mortals. Every endowment of grace and power and efficiency has been liberally provided. They look for the near return of Christ in the clouds of heaven. For them to give to the world the impression that their faith is not a dominating power in their lives is greatly to dishonor God. Because of the increasing power of Satan's temptations, the times in which we live are full of peril for the children of God, and we need to learn constantly of the Great Teacher, that we may take every step in surety and righteousness. Wonderful scenes are opening before us; and at this time a living testimony is to be borne in the lives of God's professed people, so that the world may see that in this age, when evil reigns on every side, there is yet a people who are laying aside their will and are seeking to do God's will—a people in whose hearts and lives God's law is written.... Their thoughts are to be pure, their words noble and uplifting. The religion of Christ is to be interwoven with all that they do and say. They are to be a sanctified, purified, holy people, communicating light to all with whom they come in contact. It is His purpose that by exemplifying the truth in their lives, they shall be a praise in the earth. The grace of Christ is sufficient to bring this about." **Ellen White, Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, pg 321,322**

Where Are We Today?

We are very close to the end of time.

We live between *"And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind."* **Revelation 6:13** & *"Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place."* **Revelation 6:14.**

"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man." **Luke 17:26**

As it was in Noah's day (Genesis 6), so it will be at the end of time.

The news tells the story doesn't it? Just recently there was a story of a 9 year old girl murdering people. Where do they learn?

"Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot." **Luke 17:28**

As it was in the days of Lot (Genesis 18 & 19), so it will be at the end of time.

Today we see the legalisation of same-sex marriage. Transgenderism has become acceptable. The Bible tells us that we belong to God. We are His by creation, His by redemption.

"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." **Luke 21:28**

The world is coming to an end. Soon!

"He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work."

Revelation 22:11,12

This is just around the corner.