

SATAN'S "LAST ROUNDUP"

A Temcat study

Have you enrolled?

I want to start this study by stating a most important fact—actually it may be truly the most important fact you can even learn in this life: No one is ever going to enter heaven unless he or she has been enrolled and was a faithful student in the 'School of Christ' in this world. Notice it is not any earthly organization that matters, it is the School of Christ that matters. You don't graduate in this world from that school, and dropouts—unless they repent and retrace their steps—will not make it. We cannot perfect Christian character unless we are willing to learn in the school of Christ, and make a practical use of every lesson He would teach us. Every day our Saviour gives us our work to do, and that work is to conquer every difficulty and temptation, which the day presents. There is no 'group plan' in this school and we'll talk more about that later.

The Word of God tells us:

"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD." Ezekiel 14:14

"Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezekiel 14:20

Notice it is said twice, every very important fact in the Word of God is repeated, and this is very important. Too often we are consciously or unconsciously relying on our social status; the family we come from; the groups we are part of; even the church structure for assurance that we are OK and on the right train for glory. But here God is letting us know that salvation is an INDIVIDUAL matter. It is a matter between Him and you—God has no grandchildren!

"Man's representative pleads in heaven in our behalf; and we want that the youth who have given their hearts to God will so live that Christ can freely present their cases before the Father. We hope that those who have just entered the school of Christ will continue to be learners. "If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." There are many who cease to be learners in Christ's school after they have received the ordinance of baptism. They appear more like graduates....God looks with love upon the confiding simplicity of children. ...The simple faith and trusting confidence of the child is necessary to be possessed by the learner in the school of Christ." *The Signs of the Times, 02-14-78*

There it is; you can only enter the School of Christ by being truly converted, giving the whole heart over to Christ, and continuing to be humble and teachable for the rest of your earthly sojourn.

This article is not primarily about the School of Christ, but because it is so important—and so little realized—it behooves us to make sure we understand what it really is, and how to be enrolled. Here is another look at the curriculum:

“Those who connect with the school of Christ will be careful to obey the words of the Lord. Their faith will be founded upon knowledge, for they will be diligent students of the Scriptures. Like the humble fishermen who united with the Saviour to learn of him, those who love Christ to-day will not only listen to his words, but practice his precepts, and follow in his footsteps. The greatest Teacher the world has ever known, has opened their understanding, and has given them knowledge and judgment, that they may approve things that are excellent. The most educated, as well as the most ignorant, may become partakers of the knowledge of Christ's salvation. The great apostle himself learned in the school of Christ, and strengthened his faith by his experience in following Jesus, and by acquiring knowledge of Bible history. He convinced men that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and Christ shed his glory upon the apostle, and he could speak from what he had seen and known.” *The Signs of the Times, 07-27-88*

Who is the Teacher in the School of Christ? It is God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Students may share with each other lessons from this School, but no student is ever to stand in the place of the Teacher! Also each student is obligated to check out anything shared with him with the Great Teacher before accepting it as truth.

What are the textbooks? There are several, but first and foremost is the Inspired Word; which includes the Old Testament; the New Testament and the Spirit of Prophecy. Other textbooks are God's Created works, History in the Light of Revelation, Providential Guidance and Life Experiences. Here are a few other classes and rules of the School:

“... come into a right position before God, each seeking to set his own heart and his own house in order. Talk less, and let true inward piety shine forth in good works. Be kind; cultivate love and gentleness. Pray more; read your Bibles more. Be diligent students in the school of Christ. *5 Testimonies pg. 571*

“...Let all learn in the school of Christ, meekness, purity, lowliness of heart; let them hang their helpless souls on Jesus. Live in the light shining from the oracles of God. Educate your minds and hearts to pure, elevated, noble thoughts. "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." Whatever influence you have, let it be directed to exalting Jesus.” *Selections from the Testimonies for Students and Workers of our Sanitariums, Pg. 8.*

Friends, take a good, honest look at your heart—even if you are ‘too busy’, fall on your knees and stay there until you take this honest look by the light of the Holy Spirit—ARE you in the School of Christ? ARE you sure. If you aren't... nothing else is more important then you enroll NOW! Only the applicants for Heaven that enroll and stay faithful in that School will enter Eternity! What could be more important?

There are over 500 references in the SOP pertaining to the School of Christ. In this school the Holy Spirit is the only teacher, and He will teach us EVERYTHING THAT WE NEED TO KNOW. See John 14:26. He is there to cleanse us from sin and help us fully overcome. No human pastor or teacher could ever do this. Pastors are to evangelize, baptize and bring the souls into God's Church and introduce all into Christ's School to be trained on A FAR HIGHER LEVEL THAN ANY HUMAN. See Testimonies to Ministers 119. The Holy Spirit can teach us more in one moment that all the human pastors in the world can.

“Those who are continually learning in the school of Christ will be able to pursue the even tenor of their way, and Satan's efforts to throw them off their balance will be signally defeated.” *My Life Today, Pg. 48.*

They will not be getting all 'up in a heap' over the trials and tribulations of life; they will not be easily led off track. Their eyes are fixed on their Teacher and they are not turning in their desks to look at fellow students.

The most important thing to remember is that without Jesus, God the Father, and the training and guidance of the Holy Spirit we are at best just treading water so to speak. Read about School of Christ in the SOP the focus is on you as an individual and your relationship to the God-head as you are trained to become like Jesus. You will enjoy the greatest relationship with the God-head, more wonderful than you ever thought possible. The Holy Spirit never trains any person like any other person in this world. Each one is an individual and is taught personally as if there were no other soul on earth for which Christ died. No human teachers can hold a candle to this!

A Counterfeit School:

In my worship this morning I came across an amazing fact. I was learning about the School of Christ from the wonderful book 'Sketches from the Life of Paul', and I heard about ANOTHER school that many who THINK they are in the School of Christ actually are in—It is called the 'School of Satan'! It is close beside the Synagogue of Satan and the unwary can easily turn in at the wrong door.

It is the first time I realized there are two schools and that Satan runs one of them. I knew Satan is trying to mislead and deceive—but I did not realize the School of Satan exists and he is enrolling students rapidly!

"It is a fearful thing for those who profess to be children of God, to cross the line of demarkation that should separate the church from the world. Such are Satan's most effective agents. He works through them with decision, zeal, and persistency, to devise and execute such enormities against those who are true to God, as the common sinner would seem incapable of. The very light they have slighted makes their darkness tenfold greater than it otherwise would be. When men refuse to accept the light which God in mercy sends them, they know not where they are going. They take only one step at a time away from the right path; but these successive steps lead directly to perdition. They place themselves on Satan's ground, and his spirit controls them. They cannot perceive the great change in themselves. None are transformed at once; but they enter Satan's school instead of the school of Christ, and the great deceiver educates them to do his work." *Sketches from the Life of Paul, Pg. 233.*

What a fearful thought! Being trained as Satan's most effective agents. And where are they enrolled from? From the church.

How does he get them? By encouraging them to move a bit closer to the world and to reject light that God sends them. The very light they reject, is what they most needed. Maybe it was pointing out a secret sin or the inroads of worldliness and pride. Perhaps it was counsel to turn away from indulgence of appetite and self-gratification to simplicity of life and diet. Whatever it was, it seems like just a small thing at the time and yet it causes the foot to turn in at the doorway of the WRONG SCHOOL.

They don't leave the church or their profession of Christianity—Oh No! Satan wants them right there—they are his secret agents and he trains them intently. What are some of the courses they learn in Satan's school?

“...There will be those who will misinterpret and misrepresent. Their eyes have been blinded, and they set forth the figures and interpretations that Satan has worked out for them, and an entirely wrong meaning will be placed upon the words that Sister White has spoken. .. They have educated themselves in Satan's school of misstating.” *Selected Messages Book 1, Pg. 57.*

Ah-Hah! They learn how to wrest and misstate the Bible and the SOP.

“We are not to manufacture trials and evils by our own wrong course of action. We are not to imagine difficulties, which do not exist. We need not create evils; for this is Satan's work, and he is equal to the task. When by the indulgence of a perverse temper or the natural inclinations of the heart, we help him in his work, we add to the sum of the evils which we must endure. ... We should not cloud the future by our carelessness in the present; but by thoughtful and careful performance of to-day's duties, be preparing to meet the emergencies of to-morrow.” *Review and Herald, 02-03-85*

Here we see some more subjects in Satan's School:

“The Holy spirit does not work with men who love to be sharp and critical. ... Keep back the sharp thrusts; do not learn in Satan's school his methods of warfare.” *Testimonies to Ministers Pg. 248.*

He teaches us his methods; methods of force, manipulation, mass control.

“However weak and imperfect in themselves, if they realized their weakness and their spiritual ignorance, they would receive divine strength and enlightenment. In that time of perplexity, if instead of sporting, jesting, and ridicule, there had been earnest prayer and an effort to promote harmony and unity, most precious victories would have been gained; which would have placed the work years ahead, and saved many souls. But the giving up to Satan's arrangements, and acting out Satanic attributes on that occasion, caused the record to be entered in the books of heaven, "Untrustworthy when important interests are at stake." *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials, Pg. 1229*

Here we see that joking and jesting, lightness, trifling, making fun and ridiculing all promote Satan's program, not God's. We could go on and on about the subjects taught in Satan's School and how they are so easy for the natural heart to learn. They seem just what the heart wants, because the unrenewed heart is 'deceitful and desperately wicked'.

There is one BIG difference that can help you spot the wrong school: In the School of Christ, we are enrolled as INDIVIDUALS and taught one on one as individuals and it is our FREE choice if we join or not; BUT Satan specializes in 'Group Therapy'. He knows that we are ever so much more apt to listen to him in groups than by ourselves where we have more time to think. And he specializes in force—sneaky, subtle force and more open force when he can get away with it. Let's look at some more contrasts:

There is a vast difference in school attendance and the ability to think for ones self. The School of Christ is totally voluntary and the desire to attend is left to the student. While in Jesus' School you are not brainwashed, there is no such thing as secrecy, manipulation, gossip or character assassination to name a few subjects that are not there. You are sitting at God's feet on a one-on-one basis. The best part is that if you allow the Holy Spirit to train you, the character of Christ will one day be yours. You will

qualify to work with God in the last message to go to the world. You will be prepared to receive the final outpouring of the Holy Spirit and it is the only way to receive the Seal of God, which is your promotion to the Higher School of Heaven.

This is very, very, important information for those who are working with Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the Plan of Salvation. Permit me to say that of the two schools; one by God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit; is Holy; the other by Satan and his evil angels is totally evil, but does not always appear so. Satan can masquerade as an angel of light. In Satan's School you will be working with him and his destroyers to trick, deceive, coerce and manipulate others to join in with Satan's Last Roundup. You will receive the Mark of the Beast and be promoted... to eternal death.

Satan does not want anyone to know that he runs this evil school to keep you from ever being saved. His single biggest trap for you, is to train you to sit at the feet of men (Arms of Flesh) admiring and depending on leaders and groups. He delights to cause you to believe that you must first turn to your minister or some other human being to explain anything for you—especially Scripture. When and if your local theologian can't answer your question, than you will be kept going higher until you reach the G.C. level—where you will be told that whatever answer you receive from them—you must accept as if it were from God. (If the Bible disagrees—ignore the Bible!) The same way that Satan worked the poor Rabbi's in Jesus' time on earth.

Satan delights to make you feel that when a trial comes into your life, you MUST call up a friend and talk it over with them; or better still call the pastor and abide by whatever he tells you—after all, he is EDUCATED so he must be right. He will probably refer you to a group you can join where you can all sit around together and look at your sins and discuss them—until you reflect his Satanic majesty perfectly. These deceived persons are right in the middle of Satan's school.

NEVER are you to fall on your knees with your Bible and SOP writings and plead with Jesus for light and help—that is fanaticism. But this is the first lesson in the School of Christ—are you starting to see the contrast? Satan is right in the middle of the fight to claim every Advent Believer that lives on the face of this earth and the easiest way is to convince all that they dare not "think for themselves" and seek God for themselves, in matters concerning their soul's salvation.

Do you not recall that this was what had to be done before Satan could establish his masterpiece, the Papal See? First corrupt versions of the Scripture had to be brought in and then the people were taught that only the elite could understand Scripture and the rest of people MUST not even try, but accept without question what the leaders told them. It was only a small step from that to the forbidding of the Scriptures to the common person, they were all to admire the 'godly leaders' and dote on their words. As soon as Satan put the lights out—he had a field day!

You will never know that you are in the wrong satanic school. See Testimonies to Ministers, "Pray for the Latter Rain" on pages 506-512, especially the first two pages. The pen of inspiration tells us that to receive the Latter Rain you must NOW be in the Former Rain or The Early Rain. The Early Rain of the Holy Spirit and the School of Christ are one and the same—where you submit to Jesus and the Holy Spirit to be trained first to over come all sin.

Here we are told that those who sit at men's feet and are waiting for the Final Rain of the Holy Spirit will NEVER RECEIVE IT—they will NOT EVEN KNOW that the LAST OUT POURING of the Holy Spirit is being given to God's own people.

If you work WITH God you have a free mind as long as you allow God to guide you in His way. If you are in Satan's school, you work FOR Satan and you will never have a free mind and will always be misguided by Satan until you lose ETERNAL LIFE. These poor souls will not even know that they are in Satan's school and TOTALLY CONTROLLED BY HIM.

Satan has groups working directly under his evil mind to teach that there is no real Holy Spirit. There is no place in inspiration that even suggests that, unless Satan is your guide in studying the Scriptures. Jesus has His own Spirit, God the Father has His own Spirit but they are not THE Holy Spirit, Who is a totally separate entity—the Third Person of the Godhead. Why is Satan attacking the truth of the Holy Spirit? Because how can you learn in a School if you don't believe your Teacher exists?

When God created Lucifer, who later made himself into Satan, God gave him powers that are beyond our comprehension and you cannot fight such a SUPER POWERFUL BEING WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE POWER OF GOD IN HEAVEN!

Binding in Bundles:

Satan is straining himself to make sure we don't learn about the School of Christ and realize that we are invited by the Godhead to come right in and sit down at Their feet—No one will be rejected who wants to be there. Remember Mary? Martha, all caught up in church busy-ness wanted Mary roused out of that place at Jesus' feet and put to working 'for the church'—what did Jesus say? "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10:42.

Notice Jesus indicated not only was it good to sit there—but that it was NEEDFUL! It wasn't an option. Take a good look at that verse—but ONE THING is needful—do you have that ONE thing?

Not only is Satan hiding the truth about Christ's School, but he is promoting his own school in a massive, world-wide advertising campaign and claiming IT is God's School on earth! Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes—I am serious about this—plead to have your eyes opened and you will see a tremendous movement worldwide on all levels of society to get people into groups.

From a thousand discordant voices we hear the chant; 'Man is a herd animal'—'Man MUST be part of a group', 'Male bonding', "it takes a village to raise a child", and on and on ad nuaseum. IS man a HERD animal??? I have never read in my Bible the text that says. 'In the beginning God created a herd of humans'. My Bible says God created a MAN. One of them, and a bit later He created from a part of the man, a WOMAN. By doing this he established the type of group He wanted for mankind to be centered in. He made the FAMILY!

In many places in the Bible and SOP we are told and shown that the FAMILY is the foundation unit for mankind. Satan hates the FAMILY! He teaches many courses in his school that undermine and cast reproach on the social structure God set up.

The Holy Spirit gave me another insight that fits in with this—You know how Satan is trying to get all the people today 'group minded'? And these 'groups' are all being pushed among our people and in the Advent churches as much or more than in the world? And the first thing he does as he pushes his 'counterfeit' of God's plan is—to BREAK UP the family unit.

The family unit is sacred—the church is to be made up of family units and even the church has no right to infringe on the privacy and integrity of the FAMILY! But Satan barges in and the first thing he implants in our minds is that the children should have separate group activities—the men should have groups—the women NEED to leave their posts of duty with their families and join women's ministries and go on retreats.

Especially it is important to isolate the older people! After all, some of them just might have enough experience and wisdom under their hoary hair to WARN the younger ones against Satan's tricks. It is vital that the children and youth be given word pictures of the elderly that make them look stupid, out of tune with the times, and not to be taken seriously. And the elderly themselves are told they are to 'retire' and 'enjoy' themselves and not worry about the alarming trends they cannot help but see. After all—times have changed and there are so many with better educations now—granny or gramps can't possibly know anything of value. Just be happy to stay with your own age group.

You know—as I read my Bible, I don't see any idea like that in there anywhere—No my friends! The Bible shows that the elderly family members were to be consulted with, respected, honored and even obeyed. The children and youth were to listen to them.

Satan sees to it that the youth are given separate meetings and groups and he loves it when they are left to run and direct these without guidance from older folks—especially not parents. Some of Satan's best students stand before the youth and crack jokes about parents and grandparents and implant the ideas that the young have their own lives to live and must follow the counsel of their own inexperienced ideas. The very fact of having a separate meeting or group gives the impression the youth are not expected to have any interest in what the adult or older persons would be apt to say.

Well—I was thinking about this trend, trying to see what the strategy was, and all at once I was given a thought:

If you have a herd of horses—can you TRAIN a herd of horses?

No—you cannot train a herd of horses—you have to take a horse OUT of the herd and get to know it and it gets to know you—THEN you can train A HORSE—you cannot train a herd. However a herd can be driven and forced to go where the driver wants it to go. It is important when driving a herd, not to have animals that are too smart—animals that might think for themselves and so strike out on their own, to suit their own best interests.

So this is why the devil is trying to get us all thinking in groups and herds—so he can drive us hither and yon and keep us moving and distracted so the Holy Spirit cannot teach us! Jesus cannot form a one to one relationship with us like that—But the devil can drive us where he wants us to go!

Jesus has to take us OUT of the herd and we have to get to know Him and listen to Him and THEN he can teach us.

The HERD is your arm of flesh—as long as the horses are only listening to the horses—they cannot be trained.

As long as the people are listening to other people only—and going by what they hear in the group—they cannot be taught in the School of Christ.

You see, people in the school of Christ can share with each other—BUT we must never put a person up front in our lives where the Divine Teacher belongs!

God has always treated all of us as individuals. God desires that we take all of our problems directly to Him and through no human being. Jesus is standing at the Mercy Seat interceding for YOU and ME. Friends, that is the POWER center of the universe! There He pleads His blood and His merit before the Father. You will quickly learn that Jesus does answer our prayers. You will learn to have faith that you did not believe possible in God. I keep telling everyone that God always answers all of my prayers, which He does. However you will also quickly learn to allow Him to answer all your prayers according to HIS will. You cannot believe how many times that He has answered the most minute things in my life. But the biggest help has been to TRAIN ME to never think of trying to do anything on my own WITHOUT ASKING HIM FOR HELP.

Equally as important are the human development areas such as love, patience, kindness, understanding and on and on. You remember that these are the very attributes of a soul filled with the Holy Spirit. We are to be trained to be like Christ, only the HOLY SPIRIT can do this in us.

'HERE WE GO ROUND'

Do you know what a Roundup is? Some of you have no doubt seen one—when I lived out in Western Canada for a few years, I lived in one of the main areas for shipping out range cattle and in the fall the cowboys with their horses and dogs would head out into the rangeland and bring in the cattle.

They would bunch them together and keep them moving and the animals feeling safer in their herds than alone, would move along as they were driven. They THOUGHT they were safe—they THOUGHT they could stay ahead of the 'enemy'—after all there were so many of them and only a few cowboys.

But all at once they found themselves in huge pens! There was nowhere to run any more and the animals set up such a bellowing and lamenting as would break your heart. But they could bawl all they wanted, they would never escape the pens and the slaughterhouse waited at the other end of the railway line.

Friends, the devil is staging a round up, he is a cattle-rustler because he is stealing us from the rightful owner. He intends to destroy us all if he can manage it. To cover all the tricks and snares that Satan is using to get people 'Rounded Up' would take a few books rather than a short article. But I want to point out a few.

I want to show you a few general measuring devices that you can use to see if something is of the School of Christ or of Satan.

First, if the activity or teaching is something that distracts you from your family or your duties to them—it is Satan's course, not God's.

Second, if it gets you away from your family to groups of your own gender or age—or if it gives you the idea that somehow your needs are different from the rest of your family—it is a lying spirit.

Third, if it in any way causes you to be even a little less concerned about obeying and upholding the Law of God—both the Moral Law of 10 Commandments and the physical laws of health—it is Satan’s device. If you find increasingly more interest in the group activities and less in your personal Bible study and devotion—watch out!

Fourth, if you find that the activity or teaching is causing you to feel dependant on a group, concerned about what others in the group think about you, or that you can’t plan or function without approval from group leaders or members—you are being snared—Run to the Chief Shepherd and break free!

Fifth, if the ideas you are hearing are telling you that the old ways must be dispensed with, times have changed, and we must have a new plan of action—Remember what the Word says: “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” Jeremiah 6:16 Don’t join with those saying, ‘We will not walk therein.’

Sixth, if the ideas being promoted seem new or strange and you don’t recall having seen any such thing in the Bible or SOP, you’d better go study and pray about it. If it is NOT in inspired writings, it is NOT inspired! Move away from it quickly because even if it seems ‘nice’ it is not of God.

Seventh, if you find people telling you to counsel with them, or another leader and extolling the virtues and learning of this or that person—run away and seek your counsel at the Throne of Grace. When the cattle follow the cattle—sooner or later they end up in the slaughterhouse!

I am going to try and outline a few of the ‘strange things’ that have been coming in among us. These ‘things’ often seem OK, you can’t immediately point out the danger. Often if you question them, someone will say, “Well, we are not told NOT to do this”. But if we are not told to do it either, we are on mighty shaky foundations. Remember what we are told:

“... God has in his Word established the regulations governing his worship, and that men are not at liberty to add to these or to detract from them. The very beginning of the great apostasy was in seeking to supplement the authority of God by that of the church. Rome began by enjoining what God had not forbidden, and she ended by forbidding what he had explicitly enjoined.” GC88 pg. 289

Read this carefully; it is very important to understand how the devil works. He brings in a little extra something that seems ‘nice’ and innocent enough. He always introduces it by claiming this will draw you ‘closer’ to God or promote ‘unity’.

Now I know I am going to shock a few people in what I am going to list here, because so many of these things have come in gradually and have been accepted as ‘normal’ now by many Advent believers. This is especially true of members of 20 years or less. I know I saw many of these things come in and when I did them for the first time they seemed ‘out of place’. But they clung and stayed and are now mostly the ‘norm’.

Often someone who has attended a 'retreat' or weekend workshop, or large camp meeting first brings them to a church. They introduce it as the most wonderful thing ever—and most of the time it is accepted. The few who are bold enough to speak up are usually shouldered out of the way and ignored.

Here is a partial list:

The Children's Story in the Worship Service: Oh, I can just see you throw up your hands in horror that I should question this one! Yes I do believe in good children's stories, in fact so much so that I have a whole website full of them on the internet and I send out a weekly email magazine full of them. BUT there is something shady about the way this is being done among us.

For one thing, these children in the Worship service are just back from their own Sabbath School classes and so are not in any way neglected. Also they are, or should be, sitting quietly beside their parents and should remain there. Allowing them to leave this proper place and run and scamper through the aisles and even in some cases right up onto the rostrum, is not at all proper and destroys all sense of reverence for the house of God. When I was young, we would not have DREAMED of doing this! To go up onto the rostrum was a rare privilege and would be most reverently done, if done at all.

Many times the story told is anything but spiritual and often is more spiritualistic. It seems anything is acceptable if it is called a 'children's story'. Read your Bible sometime and see the kind of 'stories' the Lord has outlined for the Children of Israel to teach to their children. Something that might be acceptable for a school day is totally out of place for the Worship Service.

The very fact that the children have this separate story causes them to feel once it is over that the rest is for the grownups and they need not listen any more. The adults tend to be influenced to feel that way also and the worship of God is degraded. If you take a close look you will see that the trend to noise and irreverence in the sanctuary and even in the Worship service, parallels the use of the 'children's story'.

It would be much better to have the preacher tell a story as many of them used to do as part of a sermon, and to have the children remain in their places by their parents and be encouraged to listen and learn to understand the sermons. In the past, children would be expected to be able to answer questions about the sermon later at home.

Did you know that the Lord warns that women and children being out of their proper places would be one of the sorrows of the last days? See Isaiah 3:12.

The practice of everyone getting up and roaming around the sanctuary talking and shaking hands is another insult to the Lord's Worship service. It focuses the attention on people and away from God. Believe me, if even an angel of God were sitting on the rostrum, you would not be interested in milling around and focusing on the human. There is plenty of time before and after worship to meet people and invite them home or such, outside of the sanctuary area.

There are two huge fields where Satan is gathering strange items to introduce into our midst, those fields are humanism and spiritualism and they overlap. Any practice that draws attention to the creature more than the Creator is humanism or spiritualism or both.

The 'Garden of Prayer' is another intrusion from the occult. Anything where the 'ministers' or group leaders 'lay hands' on the members as they worship in a 'blessing', or to give them 'power', is an affront to God, in that they are intruding between the person and His Lord.

Another intrusion that actually comes right out of the realms of witchcraft and Lucifer worship and has intruded among us so quietly that it is thought quite OK, is holding hands and standing praying in a circle—yes, you read correctly, this has its roots in pure spiritualism!

Have you ever been in a circle of prayer in a Christian meeting and something bothered you about it? Your agitation in spirit is well-justified, and you should have felt bothered. A while ago, I started digging into what it is that energizes these prayer circles, and what it is about them that leads people into the bondage of group control situations. As I dug, I asked myself, "Where did prayer circles start? Who uses them? What do they all have in common?" What I came to see shocked me, and it will shock you, because what I realized is that prayer circles are related to witches' circles.

It is only from the realm of spiritualism that we find this practice. The purpose of it has always been to draw spirits and/or focus the 'power' of the group to get what the group wants. Unholy spirits, not of God's Spirit, are energizing these prayer circles to bring people into a group control situation. What will this eventually lead to in the end? I believe it will be a fallen church ripe for control by the world system.

There is absolutely no precedence for any such thing in the Bible or SOP and even in Heaven we are told the redeemed and the angels stand in ranks or in a 'hollow square'.

Now I know that some will say. "Well, we are not doing it to serve Satan, we are praying to God." Friends, It doesn't matter what you say! Satan has established that as HIS form of worship, and he doesn't care about your 'good intentions.'

In some churches the pastors even go so far as to want to take the pews out of the church so they can have everybody sit in a circle. This is pure witchcraft. Did you know that occult Satanists will form a circle and concentrate their 'energies' on an animal in the circle's center and it will rise up and strangle to death. You know who is killing that animal—it is the devils—but these people think it is the united power of the 'group mind'—see where it is heading?? It is wrong and spiritualistic.

If you have taken part in this holding hands prayer thing—it has an effect. When you bow your head and kneel reverently together, and pray without holding hands, your thoughts are on God. BUT as soon as you are standing and holding hands, your thoughts automatically go to the people near you. Also it ends up women holding hands with men and so on—it is distracting and wrong. We are to worship God with our entire mind—not people.

Notice this warning:

"I have received letters questioning me in regard to the proper attitude to be taken by a person offering prayer to the Sovereign of the universe. Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God? . . . Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before

God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God". . .
S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 3 -PG- 1130

Friends standing in a circle and/or holding hands shows and creates a dependence upon the GROUP. A dependence and focus upon on one another and away from God.

There are many related things that grow out of this 'prayer circle' idea. In some churches they move through the building anointing and praying over each seat—this is straight from occult magic, casting a spell to influence the unwary. Some groups face the four directions or a city area and 'focus the power' of the spirit on it to control the people there. The Holy Spirit does not work like that! If God wanted to force and control—do you really think He needs us to help Him? Force and control are Satan's trademarks.

I used to take part in meditation circles and things like that when involved in New Age practices before I was born again. The overlying belief in all these things is that there is some sort of power in the group mind that can be used to manipulate and get what the group desires. This is not any different than what is happening with prayer circles and gardens of prayer and so on.

These circles are so loving, so comforting, so unifying, and seem so innocent, that many Christians think they are wonderful. People do need comfort, but they need to be pointed to the Source of all comfort, and receive comfort through the Truth of God's Word. There is a natural physical comforting that is appropriate and innocent, but stepping into a ritual, no matter how innocent it seems, is another matter. Prayer circles are a ritual, and they should be scary to us because of the way evil spirits take full advantage of the situation.

As we look at literature in connection with this practice we are finding a lot of involuntary occurrences—laughing uncontrollably; animal sounds; drunk in the spirit; babbling and falling to the floor. Dancing, shouting out, clapping, chanting—all involuntary. Friends, the Holy Spirit does not impose on us. God will not control us and cause us to do anything involuntarily. Jesus Christ died to preserve our God given free choice! Any power that causes involuntary actions or sensations—is the power of the great apostate.

Also we are warned again and again NOT to find our comfort in groups and the Arm of Flesh. Rather to seek the Lord and cultivate that One on One experience with Him in the School of Christ. Once you have that, you will not wander from group to group trying to find a sense of comfort and belonging and every time you think that you have finally found it—you end up later disappointed again.

What better comfort can exist than having the Holy Comforter living in your heart? You'll never be lonely and desolate again! "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John 14:23

One last thing: it's not only prayer circles that are unscriptural. There is also no biblical precedent for holding hands to pray, whether or not a circle is formed. I believe we should look into our own hearts to find answers to some questions when we reflexively reach for others' hands. For instance, in holding hands, do we experience a sense of oneness with others and with the spiritual realm?

Do we find an expectation rise in us that someone will communicate with us when we perform this act? According to God's word, can we be sure that "someone" will be God? Looking at the history of the use of prayer circles and the absence in God's word of these circles and of holding hands to pray, can we take part in these practices believing there is no appearance of evil in them? Can we say we have proved it to be a good thing in the eyes of God? His word says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22.) When we look at the weird spiritualistic happenings associated with these things, I honestly don't believe we can say these things are proven to be good.

There is an addicting and hypnotic effect in being in a group and doing some ritual with the group. It creates a dependency that leads away from God to leaning on the 'arm of flesh'. The arm of flesh will fail you friends; don't run with the herd in the devil's last roundup—the slaughterhouse is waiting.

"It is not good enough to do what a man thinks is right or what the minister tells him is right. His soul's Salvation is at stake, and he should study the scriptures for himself. However strong may be his convictions, however confident he may be that the minister knows what is truth, this is not his foundation. He has a chart pointing out every Waymark, and he ought not to guess at anything." GC 598

"The heavenly Teacher inquired: "What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretence that you are building on the right foundation and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy and are sinning against Jehovah? Oh, it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when men who have once known the truth, mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof; when they suppose that they are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, while in reality they are in need of everything." *8 Testimonies*, pg. 249