

# THE TEACHINGS OF MORRIS VENDEN

## HARVEST INSPIRATION DISCOVERIES LECTURE SERIES

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### CHAPTER EIGHT- PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY DOES NOT HELP OVERCOME SIN

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# LISTING OF VENDEN'S BOOKS-MAGAZINES-CAMPMEETING TRANSCRIPTS

## BOOKS INCLUDED IN THIS TOPICAL STUDY

[SBF] - "Salvation by Faith and Your Will," Morris L. Venden, Southern Publishing Association, 1978, 128 pages, paperback.

[FTW] - "Faith that Works," Morris L. Venden, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1980, 375 pages, hardback.

[ROE] - "The Return of Elijah," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 110 pages, paperback.

[DO] - "Defeated Demons," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 16 pages, paperback booklet.

[GN] - "Good News and Bad News About the Judgment," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 96 pages, paperback.

[TP] - "The Pillars," Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982, 109 pages, paperback.

[MCR] - "How to Make Christianity Real," Morris Venden, Concerned Communications, 1982, 168 pages, paperback.

[OOF] - "Obedience of Faith," Morris Venden, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1983, 95 pages, paperback.

[TKG] - "To Know God," Morris Venden, Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1983, 125 pages, paperback.

[NWI]- "Never Without an Intercessor." (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Assn, 1996).

**I've added the review of this book at the end of this document.**

## MAGAZINE ARTICLES INCLUDED IN THIS TOPICAL STUDY

[TTI-1] - "Morris Venden Talks to Insight, Part 1," Morris Venden and Editor, "Insight" Magazine, May 8, 1979, pages 7-11.

[TTI-2] - "Morris Venden Talks to Insight, Part 2," Morris Venden and Editor, "Insight" Magazine, May 15, 1979, pages 6-11.

[TCT] - "The Christmas Tree," Morris L. Venden, "Adventist Review," December 24, 1981, pages 4-5.

[SAS] - "What Jesus said about sanctification," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, January, 1982, pages 6-7.

[SAFR] - "What Jesus said about faith and relationship," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, March, 1982, pages 8-9.

[SAH] - "What Jesus said about Himself," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, May, 1982, pages 18-19.

[JSAP] - "What Jesus said about perfection," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, July, 1982, pages 8-9.

[SAPJ] - "What Jesus said about a pre-Advent judgment," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, September, 1982, pages 14-16.

[SITP] - "What Jesus said about the prophets," Morris L. Venden, "Ministry" Magazine, November, 1982, pages 22-23.

## CAMPMEETING SERIES TRANSCRIPTS INCLUDED IN THIS TOPICAL STUDY

[1-7 AUC CM] - Sermon Series at Atlantic Union Conference Campmeeting, Summer, 1979. (This was a seven-part lecture series, and each sermon is numbered: 1 AUC CM, 2 AUC CM, etc.)

Of the above materials, "Good News and Bad News About the Judgment," and "The Pillars," are among Venden's best books, for they tend to deal with doctrinal aspects on which he is more in agreement with

traditional Adventism. To these two books should be added nearly all of the August through December sections of "Faith that Works." By the end of July, Venden had covered the means of salvation and had turned to other topics. Thinking, doubtless, that his audience was smaller, he gave some unusual material in his "Insight" articles and AUC Camp meeting Series. Seven of his nine published books were issued since 1981.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT- PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY DOES NOT HELP OVERCOME SIN**

### **DEVOTIONAL LIFE**

#### **HOW WE ARE SAVED**

"We are not saved by our devotional life. We are saved by our acceptance of Christ's sacrifice for us at the cross and by continuing to accept Him on a daily basis." TKG, 53.

### **BIBLE STUDY**

#### **BIBLE STUDY AND PRAYER**

"It is possible to make this another work's trip. It is possible! Just because you read your Bible and pray every day doesn't mean your going to have a healthy spiritual life, but you're not going to if you don't!" 1 AUC CM.

### **BIBLE PROMISES**

#### **PROMISES-ONLY THAT HE WILL DO IT**

"Promises, promises. The Bible is full of promises, assuring us that God will fight our battles and win for us. But our actions often say that He isn't big enough to keep His promises. I've got to do something myself. I've got to count to 10. I've got to control my thoughts. And invariably my attention is focused back on self." MCR, 127.

#### **PRAYER- BIBLE PROMISES-SONG-DOESN'T WORK**

" Now, we've all heard of various remedies that are suggested to people for overcoming temptations. Have you ever tried any of these? I've tried all of them, but they haven't worked. I don't believe that praying when temptations come is going to give me victory. I've tried it and it doesn't work. I don't believe that quoting verses of Scripture when temptations come is going to give me victory over temptation. I've tried that, too, and it doesn't work. I don't believe that singing hymns is effective, either, because I've tried all 16 stanzas! And usually when people try these methods, they become frustrated and discouraged, because failure and defeat still come. The problem is that they are fighting the battle where the battle isn't." MCR, 158, 159.

### **[MY RESPONSE]**

[Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christ like temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive." {AA 564.1} END MY RESPONSE]

### **QUOTING SCRIPTURE**

#### **NO OVERCOMING POWER IN SCRIPTURE**

"The quoting of Scripture came as a spontaneous response to the crisis of the moment [in the life of Christ]. He didn't depend upon mouthing some magical phrases for victory. A person may pray when he is tempted, if he is in touch with the Father, and he may quote Scripture, and he may sing, but that's not what gives him the power to overcome." SBF, 107.

## PRAYER

### PRAYER NOT EFFECTIVE.

"Now, I don't believe that praying when temptations come will give me victory over them. I've tried it, and it doesn't work. Nor will verses of Scripture or singing hymns. But someone always suggests such methods, and some people try them, only to find that failure and defeat still plague them." SBF-102.

### PRAYING FOR ANSWERS WE OFTEN LIVE WORSE WHEN WE PRAY

"Sometimes I've heard Christians say, 'What's wrong with my Christian experience? When I've tried to spend time each day getting acquainted with Jesus, then the rest of the day has been horrible! I've found myself with more problems, committing more sin, than I ever did before I became a Christian. Why doesn't it really work for me? Wasn't I really converted?'

"While it sounds sacrilegious to say that we often live worse when we pray than when we don't pray, many have discovered this experience to be a reality in their own lives. The enigma of experiencing worse lives in terms of performance and behavior when a person prays, has caused many to cease continuing to seek the deeper life with Christ. [Story of Job]

"The problem is that we're cripplingly hooked on this tendency to measure our Christian experience and salvation by our performance. And even after we begin to seek the deeper life of relationship, we are still addicted to the habit of measuring our success according to our behavior. " MCR,137, 142.

### [MY RESPONSE]

[Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive." {AA 564.1}]

**It was in sleeping when Jesus bade him watch and pray that Peter had prepared the way for his great sin.** [Venden says praying does no good in overcoming sin] All the disciples, by sleeping in that critical hour, sustained a great loss. Christ knew the fiery ordeal through which they were to pass. He knew how Satan would work to paralyze their senses that they might be unready for the trial. Therefore it was that He gave them warning. **Had those hours in the garden been spent in watching and prayer, Peter would not have been left to depend upon his own feeble strength. He would not have denied his Lord.** Had the disciples watched with Christ in His agony, they would have been prepared to behold His suffering upon the cross. They would have understood in some degree the nature of His overpowering anguish. They would have been able to recall His words that foretold His sufferings, His death, and His resurrection. Amid the gloom of the most trying hour, some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness and sustained their faith. {DA 713.4}

The experience of the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane **contains a lesson for the Lord's people today.** Taking with Him Peter and James and John, **Christ went to Gethsemane to pray.** He said to them: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. And He went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, Abba Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt. And He cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? **Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.**" Mark 14:34-38. {8T 100.2}

**Read these words carefully. Many today are asleep, as were the disciples. They are not watching and praying lest they enter into temptation.** Let us read and study those portions of God's word that have special reference to these last days, pointing out the dangers that will threaten God's people. {8T 100.3}

**Ministers who are truly Christ's representatives will be men of prayer.** With an earnestness and a faith that will not be denied, they will plead with God that they may be strengthened and fortified for duty and trial, and that their lips may be sanctified by a touch of the living coal from off the altar, to speak the words of God to the people. {GW92 30.1}

We must have a converted ministry.--The efficiency and power attending a truly converted minister would make the hypocrites in Zion tremble and sinners afraid. The standard of truth and holiness is trailing in the dust. If those who sound the solemn notes of warning for this time could realize their accountability to God, **they would see the necessity for fervent prayer.** (PaM 19-Pastoral ministry) END MY RESPONSE]

### ANGRY WITH GOD-BECAUSE WE WANT SOMETHING

"Have you ever been afraid to admit to God that you were angry with Him? Or that you didn't understand His dealings with you? Or that you weren't at all sure that He was going to do for you that which you were asking Him to do? There's a big difference between having faith that God is going to answer your prayers according to your understanding, and believing in God." FTW, 122.

### WRONG WAY TO EXERCISE FAITH

"Have you ever thought that the way to exercise faith was to ask God for hard answers? Have you ever thought that the way to exercise faith was to make yourself claim promises, whether you really believed them or not? Have you ever heard that exercising faith is getting yourself into a tight spot and then waiting for God to bail you out? Not so. According to Scriptures, the exercise of faith has to do with getting often in contact with the Word of God. That's the way you exercise faith." FTW, 133.

### BELIEVING CHRIST'S WORDS

#### DISBELIEVING CHRIST

"[Matthew 15:21 quoted. The woman whose daughter had a devil.] Jesus answered her not a word; He ignored her. 'I'm not here to help you.' She fell at His feet and worshiped Him. 'You can't give the bread to the dogs; give it to me. Give me dog food! Crumbs: And Jesus said, "Great is thy faith, your daughter is whole. What is faith? Take God at His Word! Did she? If she had taken Him at His word, she would have left. Believe! Did she believe what He said? Just the opposite. So faith is NOT taking God at His word or believing! Greek experts say the meaning of faith is TRUST. Faith, believe, trust have the same root word. Trust in God, trust also in Me. This is the victory that overcomes the world, our TRUST. Devils believe, but don't trust. Trust is the best word for faith." 2 AUC CM.

**[His point here is that we should trust our lives to Him to work out in His own way, and not ask Him for or believe that He will give us various requested details during that life.]**

### CLAIMING PROMISES-FINDING A PROMISE AND BELIEVING IT

"Genuine faith as opposed to counterfeit faith is very small, but it is our only hope, because it is through faith we accept and depend upon Jesus. Now, let's take a look at the usual kind of faith. I had a man come into my office. He threw his Bible down. 'You can have it! Keep your faith and your Bible! He said. He was a Seventh-day Adventist. What's the matter? His wife had died. I told her she wouldn't die. I claimed the promise. She died. It doesn't work [claiming promises]. I told him that that was not faith. That was the popular kind of faith. Find a promise [in the Bible], believe it strongly, and it will happen. If our faith is something we have to work on or work up, then who is responsible if it doesn't happen? It is neither possible if I am operating on a false basis of faith that the devil himself can answer my prayer or get me off the track. The devil can perform miracles!" U-2 AUCCM.

NOTE: ANY REFERENCES NOTED CAN BE FOUND IN MAIN DOCUMENT