

Andrews University

**Digital Commons @ Andrews University**

---

Faculty Publications

---

5-30-1963

## **Pillars in the Temple of God**

Siegfried J. Schwantes

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

---

# REVIEW

## and Herald

★ God's Way Is Grace

—Page 2

★ Adventists Rebuild  
Iranian Village

—Page 16

# Pillars in the Temple of God

By S. J. Schwantes

*Assistant Professor of Religion, Emmanuel Missionary College*

**I**N THE letters to the seven churches the promises are designed to meet the needs of the particular churches. Thus to the persecuted church of the second and third centuries, many of whose members sealed their faith with their blood, the promise was "I will give thee a crown of life." Again, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:10, 11). How meaningful were these promises to those who, because of their loyalty to Christ, paid the supreme price in the days of the Smyrna church!

Turning to the church in Pergamos, the record says, "Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith" (Rev. 2:13). The promise that answers to this faithful attachment to God's name is "[I] will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written" (verse 17). That new name only he who receives it knows, because his own experience in the things of God gives to the name a definite and personal meaning.

To the overcomer in the Philadelphia church, the promise was given—"I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God" (Rev. 3:12, R.S.V.). Now, what is the chief function of a pillar? Is it not to uphold the weight of the superstructure, whether the roof, as in a church building, or a many-storied construction, as in a skyscraper? Those who will be pillars in the temple of God in heaven assuredly already have shown themselves pillars of God's church on earth. They will simply enjoy in a larger sphere the glorious experience of upholding God's cause.

*(Turn to page 8)*

H. LAMBERT STUDIO



## Pillars in the Temple of God

(Continued from page 1)

We read in verse 8, "I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name" (R.S.V.). The day will soon come when Heaven will reward those who in spite of their "little power" did their best to uphold God's Word and His name in the face of all opposition or indifference. Even now the church is grateful for those among her members who are true pillars in upholding her standards and aims. There is that faithful elder who sees that the appointed times of worship are observed in a decorous manner, whether the pastor is present or not. He shall be a pillar in God's temple in heaven.

There is that devoted Dorcas leader who keeps her society operating smoothly and efficiently with much or little support from other members, with an eye single to the

glory of God. She too shall be a pillar in God's temple in the New Jerusalem. And all the multitude of loyal members who love their church, who do their share of missionary work at home, and who support the far-flung program of the church in the world abroad with unabated zeal—they too, if they remain faithful, shall become pillars of God's temple in heaven.

What greater honor is there than to be a pillar in God's temple! It is an honor now, an honor that will endure through time without end. Speaking of particular gifts and functions in the church, Paul says that prophecy shall pass away, tongues shall cease, and knowledge—our present, imperfect knowledge—shall vanish (1 Cor. 13:8). All these will be superseded by that which is perfect. But there never will be a time when pillars in the temple of God will be superseded. There is no substitute for a pillar. They are useful in the church now; they will be useful in God's temple in heaven.

Notice the following gem in the

book *Education*, page 308: "In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings?"

To this question our answer can only be Yes. Most assuredly the redeemed will have a unique contribution to make throughout eternity. From the wealth of their experience they will be able to enlighten unfallen beings as to "the science of salvation," testifying to God's love and defending His justice. From pillars of the church on earth, they will be promoted to the enviable position of pillars of God's temple in heaven. O to be one of God's pillars, now and throughout eternity!



*The Art of Living.....*

**when**



**you're**

**young**

*by Miriam Hood*

### The Too-intense Friendship

**W**HY do friendships that seem so firm, so well-established, often disintegrate suddenly? I'm not speaking of romances, which are sometimes euphemistically termed "friendships." Friendship should, of course, be a part of romance, but let's talk about that another time. The problem that I'm concerned with is friendship between two young persons of the same sex. The friendship lasts for a while, then ends abruptly. Another is formed. It terminates in like manner. And so on and on. Let me state as forcefully as I possibly can that I'm not concerned with any kind of unhealthy implications, so please don't read into this discussion something that just isn't here.

No, I'm talking about the ordinary, uncomplicated, back-yard garden variety of friendship. For instance, two (or three) girls in a dormitory are inseparable. They meet between classes; they set one another's hair; they borrow one another's belongings; they attend religious services together. They share the same opinions on everything—on boys, on clothes, on other girls, on life goals. And they spend hours making sure that not one quivering emotion is left unexpressed.

But overnight the friendship disappears, like snow in a Turkish bath. Oddly enough, sometimes the former friends find it a bit difficult to recognize one another at sight. And they

may even form immediate new friendships with other girls whom they mutually disliked 24 hours before.

Ridiculous? Slightly, but certainly factual. I don't mean to use girls as horrible examples, but I honestly don't believe boys are quite so involved in this pitfall. They have *other* problems, and we'll be discussing them; so don't bristle, girls.

In this case the obvious answer is the correct answer. You simply cannot "live in someone else's pocket" without coming to dislike him. You'll dislike him because (1) you'll eventually know too much about him and (2) he'll eventually know too much about you. I don't think we need to get into all sorts of complicated psychological jargon (although you might be interested in reading some authoritative books on this subject); it's really very simple. Every person has an area of personal emotional privacy that cannot be invaded with impunity for any length of time, even though he himself may have invited the invasion. You know all about *you*—but you don't want others to know, regardless of impulsive "soul-bairings" in which you've indiscreetly indulged. Almost no one can stand to know *all* about a friend and still have total respect for and confidence in him. And I'm not even thinking in terms of sordid sins; I'm only thinking of ordinary faults—weak-

nesses that are indigenous to human beings.

There's the rub. We're all so *human!* It's useless to fight it. Do we vote as to what day of the week it is? No; because there's a certain authority in the Gregorian calendar. Well, there's even more authority in the laws of human nature.

You may ask: "Then how do families and marriages survive the closeness of contact?" Through love—the magic elixir, the perfect adhesive. But this kind of love exists rarely indeed in the friendships of youth, one reason being, I suppose, that when you're young you're changing so rapidly from emotion to emotion, from viewpoint to viewpoint, that deep friendships are difficult. You liked the modern abstractionists yesterday; you like the French impressionists today. Do you see?

Since the breakup of these intense friendships can be quite emotionally shattering, I'd suggest you avoid this experience by refusing to form exclusive, clinging friendships. There is safety in numbers—and in maintaining a modicum of personal emotional privacy.