

A video titled “The Truth About the Final Generation (It’s Not What You Think)” was posted on the YouTube HopeLives365 channel in 11/25. I hadn’t watched it at that time since the speaker, Mark Finley, has demonstrated in the past that he doesn’t always know what his favorite “the Bible” says in English. Since then, the video has gotten some positive reviews so I decided to watch it to see if Mark actually had a coherent answer regarding the spiritual state of God’s people that are living at the time of Christ’s second coming. This is commonly called “last generation theology.” To say “It’s Not What You Think” is pretty dumb since Mark isn’t a mind reader and doesn’t know what you think.

There are two general views of last generation theology in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. One is that we’ll still be sinning until Jesus comes and the other is that somehow there will be a group of people who will go through what’s called “the time of trouble,” which is the worst trouble that has ever come to this planet, without sinning at all. That time starts after Jesus finishes His ministry in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary and is the time when the seven last plagues fall on the wicked. I have never heard it explained how we’re to have sins pardoned when Jesus ceases His Most Holy Place ministry nor how a group of people known as “the one hundred and forty-four thousand” will go through that time without sinning at all. Keep in mind that out of the billions of people that have lived on the earth only Enoch and Elijah have been translated without seeing death.

If you wish to watch the video you can watch it here:

<https://youtu.be/xX7qsYKbqvA?si=Lz7cpzncbTqFBrYe>

The video starts with “The Bible makes a stunning prediction. At the end of time, God will have a group of people that are totally completely loyal to Him. A people whose hearts are undivided. A people whose lives reflect the character of Christ fully.” He then said the people would be “loyal” and “obedient.”

At 0:46 Mark asks, “Can grace so transform us that we live loyal lives? When we use the term perfection, what does that mean?” It’s not hard to know what “perfection” means.

“**1** the act or process of making perfect. **2** the state of being perfect; faultlessness, excellence. **3** a perfect person, thing, or example. **4** an accomplishment. **5** full development; completion. **to perfection** exactly; completely. [ME *f.* OF *f.* L *perfectio -onis* (as **PERFECT**)]” *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (revised second edition).

Mark turned in his bible to Revelation 14:12 and said, “And the Bible says here is the patience of the saints. Here are those that keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. So the question isn’t, will God have such a people? The question really is how will that people be revealed and how will they be enabled to keep the commandments of God. How actually is this gonna happen?” What was posted for all to read was from the New King James Version (NKJV) but Mark didn’t recite it exactly that way; that’s easy to do.

Mark wanted to know how weak sinful people could attain what Revelation 14:12 said they would attain and said he would answer that by telling a story. The story was about a sculptor chiseling away at a stone. Who knows if this really happened. I suspect Mark was telling a parable. Mark compared the chiseling away to how God uses trials to chisel away defects in us and I believe that to be a true comparison.

At 4:10 Mark says, “Revelation remember, chapter fourteen verse twelve says, here is the patience of the saints. Here are they that keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. Not tho, it doesn’t say here are those that try to keep the commandments of God. It doesn’t say here are those that wish they could keep the commandments of God. It doesn’t say here are those that hope they could keep the commandments of God. No notice also it doesn’t say here is the perfection of the saints. It says here is the patience of the saints.”

At 5:04 Mark asks, “What is this faith of Jesus? It’s a commitment to Jesus so strong that nothing can break it.”

Here’s another definition of the “faith of Jesus.”

“And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus.”
Selected Messages Book Three page 172.

At 9:08 Mark read the following quotation.

“When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.” *Christ’s Object Lessons* page 69.

And here it comes. Go up and read once again the definition of perfection. Mark says, “Many people have misunderstood this statement. They think that means we must reach some kind of sinless perfection before Jesus can return. But then you ask what is this sinflus confec perfection? It is, is it the depth of love that God has? Is it the breath of love He has? Wha, wha, wha, wha, what is this reflecting the character of Christ? What, what, what does that mean? Here, I believe this statement I believe is a promise, not a performance standard. It’s a promise of what God is going to do in and through and for His people before the end of time. That they will understand the power of love. They will be transformed by His grace and the result of that is not only pardon for sin but the results of that is the empowering of a people that will reflect the love, the purity, the humility, the compassion of Christ in their sphere and His love will be reproduced in His people.”

Mark has fooled a lot of people and he’s having trouble with simple English. The quotation that HE read from *Christ’s Object Lessons* CLEARLY sets a PERFORMANCE STANDARD in ENGLISH and Mark hasn’t yet explained how that standard will be reached. It appears that Mark may be going with the we’ll be sinning at least a tiny bit but not often until Jesus comes theory.

Mark goes on, “It’s not about achieving some kind of perfection, it’s about reflecting Jesus by grace through His power reflecting His love. Does this mean we’ll be sinless? What we mean by that? Do we mean sinless in nature? These natures will never be changed until Jesus comes. We’ll

have a, a fallen nature in the sense of the weakness of the flesh.” Mark then posts a passage from 1 Corinthians. He wants to know, “We talk about a sinless nature, what do we mean by that.

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ‘O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?’ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 (NKJV).

Mark must not have been quite satisfied with his favorite “the Bible” because instead of saying “Hades” he said “grave” when quoting it thus demonstrating that he knows his “the Bible” is wrong there. Here is the definition of Hades from the *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (revised second edition).

“*Gk Mythol.* one of the sons of Cronos, lord of the lower world, the abode of the spirits of the dead. In classical Greek the name is always that of the person (known also as Pluto) rather than his kingdom, but later it came to refer to the place itself. Greek mythology has no Satan, and Hades is represented as grim and unpitying rather than evil.”

At 12:20 Mark says, “So we have fallen natures. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, Jeremiah seventeen verse nine. Our natures are not changed until Jesus comes. But when we come to Christ, we receive the divine blessing of God; the Holy Spirit enters into our lives, second Corinthians five verse seventeen. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. So God creates within us a new heart, Ezekiel thirty-six and thirty-seven so, God gives us this new heart. We have new longings. We have new desires. So, we can choose to follow Jesus and be loyal and obedient to Him and live lives of victory and overcoming while we live in the frail humanity of these weakened bodies of ours.”

I believe Mark is a bit confused. He says “we have fallen natures” and our hearts are “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” I believe that to be true. He goes on to say that “our natures are not changed until Jesus comes.” I believe that’s another way of saying that we’ll be doing some sinning until Jesus comes.

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.” *The Desire of Ages* page 49.

Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding the humiliation of taking upon Himself our fallen nature, the voice from heaven declared Him to be the Son of the Eternal.” *Ibid.*, page 112.

Taking “man’s nature” means Jesus had the same type of body we have that needed food, exercise, rest, etc., but His heart was NOT “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” His body was like those who lived about 2,000 years before us. One of the accepted definitions of “nature” found in the *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (revised second edition) is, “heredity as an influence on or determinant of personality (opp. NURTURE *n.*).”

Mark goes on to say that we can overcome and though that’s true, it’s not an answer to the question of if we’ll still be sinning a little until Jesus comes.

Difficulty in explaining last generation theology comes at least in part from a lack of understanding of English and Christ’s nature.

“Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin, his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience.” *The Academy Study Bible* page 179 of the New Testament section or Letter 8, 1895.”

“There were no corrupt principles in the first Adam, no corrupt propensities or tendencies to evil.” *The Academy Study Bible* pages 14-15 of the Old Testament section or Letter 191, 1899.

“Christ, the second Adam, came in the likeness of sinful flesh. In man’s behalf, He became subject to sorrow, to weariness, to hunger, and to thirst. He was subject to temptation, but He yielded not to sin. No taint of sin was upon him.” *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 8 pages 38-39 or Manuscript 99, 1903.

“Christ is called the second Adam. In purity and holiness, connected with God, and beloved by God, He began where the first Adam began. But the first Adam was in every way more favorably situated than Christ.” *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 8 page 38 or Manuscript 20, 1898.

In that quotation, the misunderstood word is “propensity.” Here is the definition of that word from several English dictionaries.

“: a natural inclination : innate or inherent tendency <~ for versifying> <~ to alcoholic sprees> <function of the wife was...to curb the roving *propensities* of the male —C.W. Cunningham> <often twitted about his ~ for having his picture taken —E.J.Kahn> **syn** see LEANING>” From *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* (unabridged).

“*n* natural tendency.” From the *National Dictionary* (1939 edition).

“An innate inclination; a tendency; a bent. [from archaic *propense*, inclined from Latin *prōpensus*, past participle of *prōpendēre*, to be inclined or favorable, PROPEND.]. From *The Tormont Webster’s Illustrated Encyclopedic Dictionary*.

“1. Bent of mind, natural or acquired ; inclination ; *in a moral sense* ; disposition to any thing good or evil, particularly to evil ; as a *propensity* to sin ; the corrupt *propensity* of the will. *Rogers*. It requires critical nicety to find out the genus or *propensions* of a child. *L'Estrange*. 2. Natural tendency; as the *propension* of bodies to a particular place. *Digby*. [In a moral sense, *propensity* is now chiefly used.]. From Noah Webster’s 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*.

“an inclination or tendency (*has a propensity for wandering*). [propense f. L *propensus* inclined, past part. of *propendere* (as PRO-¹, *pendere* hang)]”. From the *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (revised second edition)).

Jesus, just like Adam when he was created, had no propensity or inclination to sin. Because of Adam’s sin, all of his descendants inherited his inclination to sinning with the single exception of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Man. Jesus was the second Adam. He had a body just like others of His time that had degenerated during the 4,000 years since creation but He had no propensity to sin.

At 17:46 Mark says, “Transformation comes, not by our will power. It comes, by God’s power. It does not come by merely trying harder, it comes by drawing closer. It is a law of the mind, that the mind gradually adapts itself on the subjects that it’s allowed to dwell. You become like what you look at.” That is true. If you neglect Bible study in favor of watching sports, corrupt movies or other entertainment, you are feeding your mind with junk that will do you no good. If you had a serious case of pneumonia, how do you think you’d do with neglecting to take the medication prescribed? The Bible is the medication for our sin problem.

At 21:38 Mark says, “Some worry that this makes God’s end time people sound superior. Are they some kind of spiritual elite? But that’s not the message at all. Every generation has been called to reflect Christ. The final one simply does so as a corporate whole as earths darkest hour of history. They’re not better than anybody else, but the times demand a deeper surrender.”

Is that true? You decide.

“In the midst of a world by its iniquity doomed to destruction, Enoch lived a life of such close communion with God that he was not permitted to fall under the power of death. The godly character of this prophet represents the state of holiness which must be attained by those who shall be ‘redeemed from the earth’ (Revelation 14:3) at the time of Christ’s second advent.” *Patriarchs and Prophets* pages 88-89.

At 23:30 Mark recommends to begin your morning with the Word of God. He also said we should “believe the Word of God fully.” Unfortunately, Mark is one of those who don’t believe there is a single Bible in the world at this time that doesn’t have some mistakes and he mainly uses one, the NKJV, that has some serious mistakes. He believes in the right for him to pick and choose just like he decided to use the word “grave” in one of his quotations instead of “Hades” that appears in his favorite fake “the Bible” but not in the King James Version (KJV). In one of his sermons that I listened to he quoted “Taylor’s Translation” which has many more errors than the NKJV. You do know what Taylor’s Translation is don’t you? It’s *The Living Bible* and he said Taylor’s Translation

deliberately so people wouldn't know that. I agree that you should begin your morning with the real Word of God.

At 25:54 Mark says, "My friends, the final generation isn't some group of spiritual superstars. They're men and women just like you. Just like me." I believe the only answer Mark has given regarding last generation theology is that perfect doesn't mean exactly perfect and that we'll still be sinning when Jesus comes.

"I saw that Satan would work more powerfully now than ever he has before. He knows that his time is short and that the sealing of the saints will place them beyond his power: he will work in every way that he can and will try his every insinuation to get the saints off from their guard and get them asleep on the present truth or doubting it, so as to prevent their being sealed with the seal of the living God." *Ellen G. White Manuscript Releases* 8 page 220 or Manuscript 7, 1850.

Notice that "the sealing of the saints" will place them beyond Satan's power.

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost." *Testimonies For the Church* volume 5 page 214.

We remedy the defects in our characters by studying the Bible daily to learn what our sins are and then to confess our sins and repent of our sins by the renewing power of God's Spirit.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9 (KJV).

The Bible is the medicine with which to cure our sinful propensities.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." John 17:17 (KJV).

Mark never mentioned Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. In fact, Mark's favorite "the Bible" destroys the heavenly sanctuary doctrine.

"And he said to me, 'For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.'" Daniel 8:14 (NKJV).

"And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8:14 KJV

"For" means something will go on for 2,300 prophetic days and then the cleaning of the sanctuary will be finished. "Unto" means the cleaning of the sanctuary won't start until the end of the 2,300 days. Here's another verse that can be used to destroy that doctrine.

“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” Hebrews 9:12 (NKJV).

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Hebrews 9:12 (KJV).

Hebrews 9:12 is not a prophecy. It’s describing what already happened. If Jesus had started His ministry in the Most Holy Place in Paul’s day, then that starting didn’t happen in 1844.

“Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, ‘*It is done.*’ And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ Every case had been decided for life or death.” *Early Writings* pages 279-280.

“As Jesus moved out of the most holy place, I heard the tinkling of the bells upon His garment; and as He left, a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. There was then no mediator between guilty man and an offended God.” *Ibid.*, page 280.

It’s Revelation 22:11 that says, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” That’s Jesus Christ speaking. If you have a Bible with the words of Christ in red, you will find that the words in Revelation 22:11 are in black; that is incorrect. He’s the same One who said in Genesis 1:3 “let there be light” and then there was light. He, our Creator, is the only One who could say “he that is holy, let him be holy still” and have that come to pass.

“But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance.” *The Great Controversy* page 620.

“Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father’s commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.” *The Great Controversy* page 623.

In my opinion, the final lesson God has to teach the universe is that sinful men who have degenerated even more in the over 2,000 years since Christ’s sacrifice, will go through the trouble which is the worst that has ever come upon this world without committing the least sin and that happens because their sins have all been completely wiped out and they no longer have any sinful propensities even though their bodies have degenerated because of sin.

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